

A
R E V I E W
OF THE
POLITICAL PRINCIPLES
OF THE
MODERN WHIGS, &c.

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IN A
SECOND LETTER
ADDRESSED TO
The Right Hon. Lord SHEFFIELD.

By the Rev. JEROM ALLEY, L.L.B. M.R.I.A.

CHAPLAIN TO HIS LORDSHIP,
And Author of Historical Essays on the Lives and
Characters of William the Third of England and
Louis the Fourteenth of France, &c.

Ne quid falsi dicere audeat, ne quid veri non audeat.
Quæ enim domus tam stabilis, quæ tam firma civitas est, quæ
non odiis atque diffidiis funditus possit everti?
Nam et majorum instituta tueri, sapientis est.

These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
Began to dream they wanted liberty,
And when no rule, no precedent was found
Of men by laws less circumscribed and bound,
They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
And thought that all but savages were slaves.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

MUCH has been lately written on the subjects of Political Constitution, and the Rights of Man. But, of those who have thus favoured the World with their opinions, most have sacrificed practice to theory, and produced rather ingenious fancies than wholesome truths; they have, therefore, perhaps, done little to advance the science of constitutional œconomy, though a great deal to spread the lust of change and the fever of discontent: nor, in our passage through the wide ocean of their abstracted politics, is that which we sometimes take for land, any thing but fogs, which, having long tempted us to approach them, leave us to experience, instead of calms and havens, the storms of objection and the fluctuations of doubt.

Whatever these novelists may conceive, no people can reasonably hope to obtain a perfect Constitution; nor would a perfect Constitution, if obtained, be always answerable, in its effects, to their wants and wishes. Sometimes, it would be counteracted in its agency by the powerful operation of “time and chance;” and it would suffer, yet more frequently, from that frailty and error which must so perpetually enter into the decisions, and be mingled with the designs of all public administration. It is vain, therefore, to indulge the lofty spirit of metaphysical revery on these subjects: it is vain to cherish enthusiasm, when enthusiasm must conduct us to disappointment: and we may

it down as a maxim, that the zealots of the day, when they talk of their fine-spun schemes of civil regulation, talk only of dreams, which are fit, perhaps, to amuse the loneliness of the cloister, but which derive no confirmation from the experience of the world, or the nature of man.

Yet, though, in this instance, hope should not be permitted to soar aloft without restriction, she is not to grovel in the dust. If it be temerity to aim at too much, it is folly to rest satisfied with too little. To communities, as well as individuals, there is a boundary, which, though they may not pass, they are allowed to reach: and the rule is infallible, that every nation has a right to freedom; not, indeed, that freedom which promotes licentiousness in each, but that which confirms security to all: that which is indebted for its energy to sure and stable laws; and which, deriving general vigor from particular restraint, leaves none reason to complain of coercion, but the mischievous and the guilty.

But where is such freedom to be found? If any where, certainly under the British Government and Constitution. That these have their defects, I am not bold enough to deny; for what work of man was ever perfect? But if they have defects, they possess excellencies also, which issue into countless and extensive blessings. What discretionary powers do they allow to the magistrate? What property do they refuse to protect? What security do they withhold from the meanest subject? —None.—They have an equal reference to all. To the Monarch and the Peasant they look with the same aspect. In the restraints they impose, they

they are the confirmation of right. In form and theory, they are embodied wisdom. In actual operation, they are liberty to millions.

Yet has this system found opponents; opponents, who attack it with all the arms which are to be drawn from the arsenals of invective and of sophistry. But they have by no means confined themselves to a reprobation of its defects, real or supposed. And why? Because, if they had done so, they knew their refutation would have been easy; the object condemned would, in most instances, have supplied its own vindication; and, from the decisions of artifice, we might have appealed to fact.

They have, therefore, proceeded to gratify by other means also, the restlessness of their spirit. What they have openly assaulted, they have toiled artfully to undermine: and they have assiduously framed, and laboriously propagated principles, which, without appearing to have an immediate reference to our Constitution and Government, are, in my opinion, well calculated to avert the favor of the people from both, and to substitute, in the public mind, disquietude for allegiance, and turbulence for public spirit,

Were I to specify even a few of the doctrines to which I have here alluded, I should be thought to have spoken with moderation of their tendency, and with reserve of their licentiousness. That the people may spoliage kings, and dissolve governments when they please; that sovereignty resides not in the rulers but the ruled; that they who should, individually, obey, are they who ought, collectively, to govern; that all monarchy is

baneful, but that hereditary monarchy is pre-eminently so ; that France will speedily acquire the ascendancy of England, if England do not imitate the conduct of France ; and that the toleration granted to all sects in these countries, though peculiarly liberal, is, nevertheless, not toleration but despotism ;*—these are sentiments, surely, of which he who asserts they are qualified to produce the most mischievous effects, will have no reason to expect the contradiction of the moderate and the wise.

Generalities of this nature, indeed, are doubly injurious ; injurious, because the errors they include are less easily to be detected by common minds ; and because they are designed not only to urge men to the claim of fancied rights, but to excite the belief that oppression is experienced, where imagination only can espy a grievance. They have, therefore, artfully been employed to further the schemes of party : they have infused a dangerous spirit of dissatisfaction into many who are better inclined to adopt than to investigate opinions : they have converted tavern wits into noisy politicians ; and stimulated those to wield the pen of faction, whose hand nature intended but for the spade or for the plough.

Look into the most moderate of those popular pamphlets which issue daily from the press, like
insects

* The tenets here enumerated, are accurately copied from the pamphlets of the new race of Whigs which has sprung up amongst us. I shall be called upon to advance my authorities in the course of the following pages.

infects from the banks of the Nile, and you will see asserted nothing more frequently than these hazardous doctrines. They reach you even through the medium of common converse: they rush with rumbling vehemence upon your ear, from private clubs and public meetings, where tenets less obscure and involved would find few to comprehend them, and where they are admitted and embraced but because they prompt ignorance to animosity, and excite temerity to war.

To shew the errors and danger of these principles; is the chief object of the succeeding pages. I shall, therefore, sometimes be involved in abstracted theories, and implicated speculations; but I shall endeavour to make theory and speculation subsidiary only to the regulation of conduct, and to the promotion of a patriotic attachment to the laws. Meer curiosity should have nothing to do with disquisition of this nature. He who treats of political subjects, should keep his eyes perpetually fixed on practical utility; and chastity of style, or splendor of imagery, is worse than nothing, if it be not employed to extend the influence of wholesome truth, and to promote the accomplishment of salutary design.

I beg, here, however, permission to remark, that, if, in speaking of the party whose principles I condemn, I have used the word "Modern Whigs," I by no means adopt it with the latitude in which it has sometimes been applied by Mr. Burke; and I utterly disclaim all allusion to that respectable body called Opposition. Were I to arraign the principles of an association so weighty and so spirited, the libel would be regarded as a
satyr

satyr on myself. I know that, however that association may condemn measures, they venerate the Constitution; and however they may object to the mode of public administration, they stand, like centinels on the rampart, prepared to defend the rights and liberties of the nation. I see in them a great, and wise, and powerful confederacy, knit together by the ties of political honor, and zealous to maintain the essential forms of that government, the proceedings of whose agents they have thought it patriotism to decry. I see in them a party, whose spirit embraces an Empire: a party, not the foe of order and tranquillity; not the abettors of tenets alien from the Whiggism of the Revolution Parliament; but a decided enemy of those new positions which have been lately advanced by an adventurous faction, and are promotive of nothing but the lust of change, and the schemes of licentiousness.

Let me, then, be explicit. When I use the phrase "Modern Whigs," I mean to advert to those only, who, during the last two years, have distinguished themselves by inflammatory publications, and aniversary revels. And that the characters who constitute this respectable phalanx, are merely Modern Whigs, wholly discordant in doctrine from the Whigs of 1688, every page of their writings will proclaim. Nor is it from obscure hints, and ænigmatical insinuations that their temper has been learned. They openly and fiercely avow their principles: and the avowal demonstrates that they regard the Revolution as a fallacy, the Constitution as a fraud, and the Protestant

stant Succession as destructive of the very Liberty for which it was cherished.

Is this harsh!—Take the proof from themselves; and determine of the party, by the sentiments of its leaders.

With respect, then, to the Constitution as it exists at present, their creed stands thus. “ The
“ criterion which distinguishes freedom from slavery
“ is wanting among us. If we were to judge from
“ the black and bloody list of persecuting statutes
“ which still disgrace our Code, England might
“ be deemed still plunged in the deepest glooms of
“ superstition. Our House of Commons is a
“ venal, cumbrous, and expensive chamber for
“ registering Ministerial Edicts. In this country
“ we are mocked with a shadow of representation,
“ and, having no representation, can have no
“ liberty. In the British Government every thing
“ appears to be the reverse of what it ought, and
“ what it pretends to be.—It is a Government not
“ of check but conspiracy, which can only be
“ repressed by the energy of popular opinion.—
“ There is, in short, no Political Constitution in
“ England, or, if there be, it is chiefly excellent
“ in form and theory.” *

This language is decisive. But hear them a little longer, and they will afford a yet better exposition of their character and intentions. They will

* See *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*. p. 169. *Idem*, p. 161. *Rights of Man*, p. 29. *Vin. Gal.* p. 161. Price, *Serm.* p. 45. *Rights of Man*, p. 62. *Lessons to a Young Prince*, p. 49. Price, *Serm.* p. 44. *Priestley's Letters to Mr. Burke*; *passim*.

will explicitly assure you “ That the public mind
 “ in the Seventeenth Century was not sufficiently
 “ enlightened for the great purpose of legislation—
 “ that the Protestant Succession was the *supposed*
 “ means of preserving our Liberty, but that, to
 “ that means the end has been most deplorably
 “ sacrificed.—that our ancestors at the Revolution
 “ punished the usurper without meliorating the
 “ Government ; proscribed usurpation, without
 “ correcting its source ; and, not only left many
 “ gross, radical and multiplied absurdities in
 “ their political system, but adopted nothing
 “ save impotent and illusive reforms. — that,
 “ moreover, they (the Modern Whigs) pay
 “ homage to the Revolutionists of 1688, not for
 “ what they *then* did, in a bigotted and benighted
 “ age, but for what they now would do, when
 “ the noble flame of Republican enthusiasm has
 “ burst forth. And, finally, that all govern-
 “ ment is, at best but a necessary evil ; that the
 “ Revolution is on the wane, and eclipsed by the
 “ enlarging orb of reason ; that the time will infal-
 “ libly arrive when our governors shall be
 “ obliged to supplicate, for the smallest pittance
 “ of their power, that people whom they oppress
 “ and despise ; and that it behoves men at length,
 “ to cease to be suppliants for their rights, or to
 “ seek for them like mendicant’s as a precarious
 “ boon from the arrogance of usurpers. *

Such

* *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, p. 146. *Idem*, p. 148. *Idem*,
 p. 157, 148, 165, 246. *Life of Paine*, p. 92. *Rights*
of Man, p. 39. *Vin. Gall.* p. 162, 163. — I have
 inserted these quotations in the exact order in which the
 several doctrines of these writers, are introduced into the
 text.

Such sentiments require no developement. They are too plain for mistake, and too explicit for commentary; and, while they afford a luminous explanation of the designs and wishes of modern faction, they declare, in language which cannot but be understood, the compleat alienation of their authors from the principles of ancient Whiggism; from those generous principles which guided the conduct of the Patriots by whom the Revolution was accomplished, and Law and Liberty were rescued from bondage.

When I speak, however, of the intentions and efforts of this party, I do not mean to insinuate that all reformation is to be repressed, and real abuse suffered to remain. I reverence the man who toils to meliorate our Laws, and, where they want to be defecated, to defecate our institutions; but I love not to see those who are utterly hostile to our Constitution endeavouring its subversion, and labouring, with hands which could not build an hovel, to demolish a temple.

To conclude. There are certain evils which cannot possibly be eradicated from Government, and of which the excess only is to be prevented. There are certain evils, too, like some disorders, of which the physician who attempts the cure, will destroy the patient he would heal. To those characters, then, who scorn to make any allowance for irremediable defect; who survey every petty irregularity of the political world through the microscope of theory; and who, pointing to remote and ideal perfection, urge us to chace it, at the expence of all that we possess, notwithstanding they themselves have so often found the beauteous shape, converted in

their embrace, into an unsubstantial cloud—to such persons I would say, that one practical truth is better than a thousand speculative fancies; that the patient forbearance which will submit to much, is infinitely preferable to the inconsiderate temerity which would hazard all; and that a well-meaning and harmless ignorance is a treasure, compared with a disorderly and inconstant knowledge. I would remind them also, that abuses are not to be removed by hasty zeal, and sudden innovation, but by that calm and steady wisdom which, condemning the propagation of licentious tenets, regards the improvement of manners, and the diffusion of virtue, as the previous step to civil reformation. And, indeed, to adopt an observation quoted by Doctor Johnson, * “ as all political evils derive their original from moral, these cannot be removed, until those are first amended. He, therefore, who strictly adheres to virtue and sobriety in his conduct, and enforces them by his example, does more real service to a state, than he who displaces a Minister, or dethrones a Tyrant; because this gives but a temporary relief, but that exterminates the cause of the disease. No immoral man, then, can possibly be a true Patriot; and ALL THOSE WHO PROFESS OUTRAGEOUS ZEAL FOR THE LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY OF THEIR COUNTRY, AND AT THE SAME TIME INFRINGE HER LAWS, AND DEBAUCH HER PEOPLE, ARE BUT DESPICABLE QUACKS, BY FAUD OR IGNORANCE INCREASING THE DISORDERS THEY PRETEND TO REMEDY.”

* Essay on the Origin of Evil, p. 28.

A
R E V I E W
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POLITICAL PRINCIPLES
OF THE
M O D E R N W H I G S.

MY LORD,

WHEN I entered upon the letter which, not long since, I had the honour of addressing to your Lordship, * I indulged the hope, that I should have been able to reconcile to method a more general examination of our late metaphysical instructors in the science of politics. But those tenets were of too miscellaneous a nature not to baffle my intention. They led to discussions wholly inconsistent with unity of design; and I had no option, but to abandon a plan to which they scorned to be reconciled, or to make them the subject of a second letter. I, therefore, beg leave once more to solicit your attention.

I am, however, aware of the probability that the works which contain the principles I am here

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to

* "Observations on the Government and Constitution of Great Britain, including a Vindication of both from the Aspersions of some late Writers, particularly Dr. Price, Dr. Priestley, and Mr. Paine."

to review, have, as yet, but in a very slight degree, attracted your notice. You, my Lord, are no Modern Whig.* You condemn not the wisdom of the fathers of the Constitution. You do not admire wanton aberrations from experience and precedent: and, instead of patronizing, by your approbation, the plausible reveries of Republican speculators, you can occupy your hours in disquisitions, not daring from temerity nor sophistical from craft, but of serious importance to your country as a commercial nation, and of real honor to yourself as a citizen and a man. I should not, therefore, have been very solicitous to direct your regard to the writings of recent politicians and innovators, if they had not contained sentiments which tend to retard the progress of that national prosperity your labours would promote: sentiments which, though sometimes specious, are often false, and often criminal; are calculated to augment the inveteracy of faction, and the turbulence of discord; and are utterly hostile to the order and tranquillity of social life; to those, alike, who govern or who obey.

In undertaking the examination of such principles, I presume, my Lord, I act not in opposition to my duty. At certain seasons, “not to speak
“ out is to connive.” When individuals, vicious
in

* I must, once for all, beg the reader to recollect, that I use the term “Modern Whig” with no reference but to those political writers and their partizans, whose singular tenets I have undertaken to review, and to whom I have particularly adverted in the Advertisement.

in sentiment, and bigotted to a cause, endeavour to propagate doctrines which seem designed to destroy the well-being of the State, can it be wrong, in any sense, political or moral, to unravel their fallacies, and to stigmatize their attempts?—Is the effort blameable which would correct the republican temper so plainly indicated in their writings, so inimical to our Government and laws, and so promotive of popular licentiousness and phrenzy?—Will the wise reprove the attempt which would counteract the views of those who have lately drudged in the circulation of treasonable libels, of poisons corruptive of the very heart of the nation, and producing, wherever they reach, the worst evils that can assail the political body?—Is it contrary to patriotism and honor, to warn my fellow-countrymen of the mischievous tenets of those, who, could they once attach to themselves the faith and the favour of the multitude, would, probably, like their brethren in France, usurp authority to abuse it, and demolish the Constitution to demonstrate their skill in reformation?—I cannot think so—When characters, such as I have here spoken of, are not afraid to thunder their rash opinions in the ear of the Nation; when they form themselves into clubs of British Jacobins; when they issue thanks and congratulations, with an official spirit, to French assemblies of abstracted politicians; and when their designs, if their designs may be inferred from their publications, aim at little short of the entire subversion of the whole Government of the kingdom;—at such a period, not to interpose, and with energy, would be a direct dereliction of all duty; would
be

be to betray the cause which public-spirit invokes us to befriend ; and to acquire an odious partnership in the guilt of a cabal, ready, it has been thought, to immolate their country and the laws at the altar of Faction.

My Lord, these men have rendered it a common cause to hold up their sophisms to contempt, and to counteract their influence over the public mind *. That the principles they avow cannot extend far, and will be always, and effectually opposed by the presiding spirits of the Nation, who have too much wisdom, and too much at stake to adopt them, has been repeatedly asserted, with a confidence fearless of contradiction. This, however, is not so certain. Have no presiding spirits in France promoted the doctrines which prefaced the subversion of their Government? Have no presiding spirits encouraged there

* The least mischievous effect which the writings of this party can produce, is a restless and factious temper in the people ; and such a temper is the immediate bane of all public happiness. Hitherto we have known how to profit by the blessings which Providence has scattered over these favoured islands ; by the capaciousness of our harbours, the temperature of our climate, the fertility of our soil, and the abundance of those mineral treasures which have been stored amid the strata of our hills. But no people, once written into discontent and faction, can long continue to benefit by local or any other advantages. Even in freedom they will become miserable. Industry, the life of nations, will expire amongst them. Licentiousness will alienate them from labour and from obedience : and, in alienation from obedience and labour, they will find penury and ruin.

there the diffusion of those levelling systems, the consequences of which the Nation laments in tears of blood? Have no presiding spirits hazarded their all, in support of innovations, by which they have lost their all; innovations which contained the seeds of so many public and private calamities? The game, then, which has been once played, may be played again. The errors which have misled our neighbours, may find abettors amongst ourselves. But, were we even assured that not a single character of our Aristocracy was within the reach of a single factious sentiment, it would not follow, that we might, without mischief, suffer the mind of the multitude to be tutored to licentiousness. What is more dangerous than a prejudiced, perverted, and impassioned multitude? Will they listen to, or be subdued by the calm representations of an enlightened gentry?—No! No!—It is madness to leave them to be corrupted into rebellion: for, when corrupted, it is vanity to oppose them. The storm is irresistible, and the Nation wretched!

In such as are inclined to attack, a temper appears very different from that which influences those who are inclined to defend the Constitution. While the latter are cold in their panegyric, the former are intemperate in their invective; and the object which one party does little more than tacitly approve, is opposed with open and avowed hostility by the other. What may be the result, is beyond the reach of the human eye. But I cannot behold such stoical moderation in the friends of Government, and such persevering animosity in the foes; I cannot behold those in some degree, retiring from
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the conflict ; and these holding in defiance Synods of Sedition, and disseminating, through the kingdom, principles at once inflammatory and subtil, without thinking there is some danger. Though an avowed contempt of the established institutes of the State may, in individuals, be despised, it becomes equally alarming and reproachable when it distinguishes a faction. It is not, therefore, unworthy of public animadversion : and to meet it only with supineness or acquiescence, is to give strength where nothing else is wanting to accomplish the triumph of licentiousness ; is to foster the enmity which longs to plant itself on the ruins of the Constitution.

The spirit that animates the body of which I speak, had no recent birth. Under the banner of Cade and Ball, it acted upon the same levelling principles, and displayed the same pretended attachment to the Rights of Man, by which it has lately acquired distinction. It was cherished by Cromwell, until Cromwell had completed his scheme of usurpation : it was the animating soul which dictated the decrees, and regulated the movements of the Rump Parliament : and it enjoyed decided victory, when Hugh Peters poured his song of odious exultation ; poured it, while humanity and justice, shuddered and wept.

To the renovation of this spirit, various circumstances have lately conspired. The members of the Revolution Society annually meet, to drown their political sorrows in flasks of Champaign, after they have been instructed, by Presbyterian eloquence, at the Old Jewry, in the servitude of kings, and the paramount supremacy of the people.

Before

Before one of these assemblies Dr. Price was, not long since, appointed to preach. This was a distinguishing honor; and, accordingly, he resolved to produce something which might prove he deserved it. He well knew that, of those he was to address, many were fond of adventurous speculation, and by no means attached to the doctrines of Lechmere, Montagu, Jekyll, and Hawles. Under the influence of this opinion, he seized his pen. He feasted in idea on the prostration of kings. He toiled, theorized, declaimed, and at length illuminated his auditors and the world by a sermon, * of which the invective at least is superabundant, if the argument be scanty.

The sentiments and reasoning of this discourse, aided in their agency by those very disorders in France, which, in the eye of wisdom, appeared to be their refutation; excited in the minds of many, an ardent desire to innovate upon our Government, and to trim and shape it to the barbarous form of the Gallic system. Nothing but the politics, and theories, and dreams of the "National Assembly," were deemed worthy of Characters who aspired to the name of Patriots: nothing could be adopted by the people of Great Britain with more wholesome effect: nothing did greater honor to the cause of freedom, and promised more decidedly to advance the dignity of human nature. Such was the language, openly held, for a season, by a numerous and popular party, and held, too, with all the zeal
which

* On the Love of our Country.

which novelty generally excites, and with all the vehemence which is commonly displayed in a bad cause. It was forgotten that, even had the designs of the French been conceived with judgment, and ripened by experience, they could have no connection with either our manners, customs, humours, or attachments; and, therefore, with respect to us, could not justly be regarded as salutary or wise. It was forgotten that the schemes of the Parisian Legislature were unknown in their consequences; were unconfirmed by practice; were contrary, in many instances, to every thing that had been sanctioned by the wisdom of times past; were rash, and hasty, and violent experiments, made at the expence of many millions of people, and supported, on some occasions, but by the tyranny of proscription, by compulsory oaths, by the afflicting laws of *Lese Nation*, by the prying vigilance of Committees of research, by the ferocious and sanguinary madness of the multitude, and by the menaces of despots intimate with persecution. All this was forgotten; and the democratical insanity which was raging on the opposite shore, began to spread in these islands also. At a crisis thus important, every physician of the state was called upon to oppose his skill to this intellectual disease. Mr. Burke thought so, and, employing all the talents of a most enlivening eloquence, he produced his "Observations" to the world. But, perhaps, it would have been better, if he had not irritated those by reproach, whom he confuted by wisdom; and had not allowed the dictates of genius to be intermingled with the effusions of zeal. As it was, his adversaries grew every day
more

more numerous and determined ; and his work was incessantly attacked in fugitive paragraphs, and weighty volumes ; and not merely by the learning of men, but by the vivacity of women.

His opponents, however, did not, as your Lordship will readily conceive, accurately confine themselves to the disquisitions of the book they affected to arraign. They, at times, created evils, that they might have the glory of exposing them : they serpentinized in a maze of perpetual obliquities : and, after having, by all the sorcery of sophistical mutation, endeavoured to make shades substantial, and to melt down substances into shades, to exhibit ideal mischiefs as real, and real blessings as ideal ; they demanded the honors of a triumph, and called on the people for the wreath due to wisdom and patriotism.

Yet, my Lord, upon examining the writings, of which I have here given the history, I cannot admit the opinion, that their authors are so very meritorious as they think themselves. They have, indeed, approached the pile of the Constitution, with a spirit not less bold than that of the hero of old, who fired the temple of Ephesus. They have demonstrated a wondrous skill in that logic of conversion, at the bidding of which facts appear to dissolve into air, and fiction assumes the guise of truth. Yet some objection may be started to their claim of popular praise—To perpetrate bad actions is a crime incomparably less heinous than to inculcate corrupt principles. Such principles not only teach man to do ill, but render it almost impossible he should do well : they pollute the heart while they vitiate the

understanding ; and, thus empoisoning the very source of virtue, leave nothing of shame or honor in the breast of the sinner, which might one day restore him to himself. What, then, shall we say of those who drudge to propagate tenets of political depravity ; who struggle to taint the mind of an whole people by factious publications ; and who effuse doctrines which, were they generally adopted, would issue at once into licentiousness and disorder, and terminate in the misery and ruin of the State ? I have consecrated an altar in my heart to those from whose labours or talents their country derives advantage. The soldier who defends the State ; the artizan who promotes its manufactures ; the merchant who enriches it ; and the magistrate who is faithful to its laws ; are among the characters to whom national respect should present a civic crown. But, of those who toil to impede the magistrate in the execution of his duty, and to stimulate the fury of political schism, what is the desert, or what should be the recompence, I need not say. That they have little to claim for services rendered to the public, is certain. For what services can be conferred on a people by the progeny of faction, and what celebrity can be merited by the efforts of licentiousness ?

If we now pass from the moral to the literary character of these favourers of newly-invented Whiggism, we shall be soon convinced they have scorned to distinguish themselves by neatness or accuracy of style. Some of them, though they have spoken as if “ with the voice of a multitude,” have sought neither to conciliate favour by elegance, nor

to

to recommend sentiment by urbanity : and others, utterly negligent of the structure of their language, have forgotten that words ought to be laboured when they are intended to pass for things, and that they who exalt themselves into the tutors of Nations, would be more likely to accomplish their aim, by conveying their reasoning, such as it is, in phrase somewhat smooth and correct, than by neglecting, in utter contempt of their pupils, every thing required by decency, propriety, politeness, and grammar *.

Nor is the information they convey always learned and important. That " it is the nature of man
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* Of the writers of this party Mr. Mackintosh is certainly the most nervous, spirited and correct, though I think even he has sometimes fallen into grammatical and rhetorical error. But the praises due to a lively fancy, and accurate phraseology, have not, in any degree, been merited by Doctor Price, Doctor Priestly, Mr. Paine and their subalterns. Of the rude and careless structure of Doctor Priestley's language, especially, I could, with the utmost facility, adduce many instances : and that Mr. Paine is utterly ignorant of the common rules of grammar, and is, in his happiest moments, coarse, vulgar or unintelligible in his expression, few who have read his Rights of Man, will venture to deny. When he informs us that " Titles are but nick names, and every nick name is a Title : " that " the elevated mind of France has breeched itself " in manhood : " that " through all the vocabulary of Adam, there is not such an animal as Duke or Count ; " and that " the national purse is like what the common people call ride and tie, and is the common
hack

“to die, and to continue to die, as long as he shall
 “continue to be born”—That “the weaker any
 “cord is, the less it will bear to be stretched”—
 “That “when man ceases to be, all his wants
 “cease with him”—That “the circumstances
 “of the world are continually changing,
 “and the opinions of men change also”—
 That “man when he came out of the hands of his
 “Maker, was man”—And, that “those who lived
 “an hundred years ago were then moderns, as we
 are

back which each mounts.”—he exhibits but an imperfect example of that rudeness of dialect of which he is perpetually guilty. In other places his language is that of jargon; every word is an ænigma, and every ænigma is involved in impenetrable darkness. For example.

“The duty of man is not a wilderness of turnpike gates, through which he” (the duty, certainly) “is
 “not to pass from one” (wilderness) “to another.”

Civil power is made up of the aggregate of that class of the natural rights of man which *become* defective in the individual in point of power, but, when collected into a focus, *becomes* competent to the purposes of every one.”

“In England, the right of war and peace is said to reside in a metaphor, which metaphor is shewn at the Tower for six pence or a shilling apiece.”

“The graceful pride of truth preserves in every latitude of life, the right-angled character of man: and it is the faculty of the mind to become what it contemplates.”

Mr. Burke has swabbed the deck: has scarcely left a name legible in the list of kings: has mowed down and thinned the House of Peers with a scythe more formidable than (*that of*) death and time.

Die quibus in terris, et eris mihi magnus Apollo.

"are now."*—Such are many of the maxims which some of the chiefs of the party have generously brought forth to enrich the poverty of English intellect. But whether, by doing so, they have demonstrated any great fertility of fancy, or extent of learning, I shall not stay to determine; though, I confess, it would not much surprize me, if they were next to address us in the language of arithmetic, and elaborate the proof that, if two be multiplied by two, the product will be four.

Without dwelling longer, however, on the verbal dexterity, and profound erudition of those Goliaths, who have come forth to defy the armies of the British Israel, let us, now, enquire into the spirit, the tendency, and the truth of their principles.

In all their writings, they frequently and boldly declaim on the general misery of the state. That we are pusillanimously submissive to our rulers; deprived, in many cases, of our dearest rights; called upon, by the pravity of the Constitution, to vindicate the insulted majesty of the people, and to confirm their ascendancy over law and government; are assertions which they perpetually and eagerly advance, but which, they think, do not require to be enforced by any vigor of reasoning, or energy of statement. That which is thus general, demands, however, but a general answer; and opinions advanced without proof, may, without proof be contradicted also. To their complaints, then, that our freedom is impaired by the

vices

* See Rights of Man.

vices of our governors, and through the defects of our laws. I reply by a brief history of English Liberty.

It is many centuries since English Liberty had her birth. She appeared, at first, of a complexion not very healthy, and of an aspect not remarkably striking. Her Constitution contracted infirmity from the ill treatment of her enemies, who included in themselves at once the power of a Popish hierarchy and of the throne. Still, however, she continued attached to the Island which, she knew, was one day to become her favourite abode. The Reformation, too, had begun to rescue men from the galling chains of religious despotism: and from that moment, it was observed, she daily acquired new strength. Her stature became more noble, her look more confident, her eyes more piercing. She derived some solid privileges from the unhappy Charles; and, though she soon found reasons to lament his fall, and had to weep under the iron scourge of a fanatical Usurper, her authority augmented from reign to reign, 'till the Revolution placed in her hand the scepter of power, and promised the consummation of glory. She now fostered trade; cherished industry; established order, and taught the wholesome rules of obedience and of power. Like every thing else that contributes to national honour, the arts and sciences felt and flourished under her influence. New light burst upon the moral as well as the political world: and the glooms of tyranny fell upon the nation no more. Against her, however, who was thus occupied in diffusing felicity, one enemy arose. His name

was

was faction; and he was the wily offspring of prosperity and of pride. Like Proteus, he appeared to have been endowed with the faculty of assuming diversity of shape. At one time, he indulged his malignity, under the fascinating form of public spirit: at another, he imitated the deportment, and wore the guise of freedom, that he might more effectually incline his hearers to licentiousness and to riot. He was, now, perched at the ear of the demagogue, whispering invective, and infusing malignity: and now he hung over the multitude like a gloomy mist; darkened to their view the whole political horizon; and dropt upon their mind the poisonous dews of party virulence. His tongue, though frequently clamorous, was often eloquent, so that the plausibility of his argument has, sometimes, deceived even Liberty herself. Hence, obtaining her countenance, on particular occasions, he is often caressed where he should be despised, and even while he secretly exerts his power for the purposes of her ruin from whom he derived it. He ceaselessly affects to be agitated by the feelings, and to glow with the flame of patriotism; but is mostly found amongst the weak and the low, dealing out a portion of his own spirit to paltry cabals, directing the little machinations of tavern clubs, enforcing his precepts in anniversary meetings, or dictating the angry speeches of hustling-orators, and speculating statesmen. By these means, he has been successful enough in propagating discontent; and so audacious has he become, from the influence conferred to him by his own arts, and by the numerous pam-

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phlets

phlets which his partizans have lately given to the world, that he has openly toiled to place licentiousness upon the throne, which freedom has so long and so successfully occupied. But his efforts have failed, and his subtilties been exposed : and freedom continues to possess, in the virtues of the monarch, in the firmness of the legislature, and in the prudence of the people, her support and her defence.

“ And now, though many a dark and stormy year,
 She dropt o’er Albion’s isle the patriot tear,
 Retir’d to mountains from the craggy dell,
 She caught the Norman curfeu’s tyrant knell ;
 She sorrowing heard the Papal thunders roll,
 And mourn’d th’ ignoble bondage of the soul :—
 Yet now reviv’d she boasts a purer cause,
 Refin’d by science, form’d by generous laws ;
 High hangs her helmet in the banner’d hall,
 Nor sounds her clarion but at Honour’s call ;
 Now walks the land with olive chaplet crown’d,
 Exalting worth, and beaming safety round ;
 Sees barren wastes with unknown fruitage bloom,
 Sees Labour bending patient o’er the loom ;
 See Science rove through academic bowers,
 And peopled cities lift their spiry towers ;
 Trade swells her sails wherever ocean rolls,
 Glows at the line, and freezes at the poles,
 While through unwater’d plains and wondering meads,
 Waves not its own, the obedient river leads.”

Without, therefore, reposing our confidence on those adventurous generalities of the Whigs of the hour, which assert the despotism of our Government, we are, now, to advert to the more particular doctrines which that body are so anxious to maintain.

maintain. Such a criticism will not, indeed, conduct us through scenes of elegance and taste: nor lead to the contemplation of works consecrated to public utility by imagination or science. It will neither heighten our ideas of human talents, nor animate the heart by views of human virtue. It will, on the contrary, introduce us into the obscure and dangerous labyrinth of political theory; and it will open upon us prospects on which those only can dwell with pleasure, who are frantic for disorder, and furious for change. But, though it may prove painful, it may not be unprofitable, and is not unnecessary: it may not be unprofitable, because it may instruct us to beware of that innovating spirit which has, at present, so many advocates: and it is not unnecessary, because the principles which it is designed to exhibit in their genuine light, have already made a considerable progress among the people, and have excited disquietude and controversy, where there should be nothing but unanimity and peace.

That the people have a right to dissolve old Governments and to frame new, whenever they please, is the leading tenet of the system maintained by this sagacious association of political theorists.* This doctrine they have propagated

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with

* "That which an whole nation *chooses* to do, it has a right to do." Rights of Man, p. 7.

"All legitimate government is a democracy, if by a democracy be meant the power of the people." *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, p. 103.

"We

with confidence, and enforced with zeal, as if it were no less salutary than true. Is it either? We will enquire.

And here, my Lord, it must be obvious, that all positions which unnecessarily urge the people to an exertion of their power, are eminently mischievous. They can have no tendency but what is directly hostile to the peace of society, because they promote disention between the rulers and the ruled; and because they are calculated to excite those factious passions which, once excited, it is almost impossible to controul. The laws therefore of every political establishment, though, on the topic

“ We have a right to choose our governors, and to form a government for ourselves.” *Love of our Country*, p. 34.

“ The nation is the pamafter of every thing, and every thing must conform to its will.” *Rights of Man*, p. 56.

“ The Revolution has established the right of the people to frame the government, and to bestow the crown.” *Vindiciæ Galliæ*, p. 138.

“ The supreme magistracy of England is a direct emanation from the sovereignty of the people.” *Idem*, p. 140.

“ All mankind have an unalienable right to frame a government for themselves. It might be contended, have a right to change the government even if they are happy.” *Rights of Kings*.

“ The depositories of public power, whether Kings, senates or parliaments, are subject to the people.” *Lessons to a Young Prince*, p. 26.

The public will is the only law of political liberty. *Idem*, p. 72.

topic of submission, they have spoken with the most decided voice, have, on that of resistance, been uniformly and utterly silent: and it will not be readily denied, that every speculative reasoner, however persuaded of the truth of his opinions, should observe the caution of which the wisdom of legislation have thus prudentially exhibited an example. Government was formed for the protection, and, consequently, for the restraint of men. It rests not, however, on its own strength. Its support is opinion, and its power acquiescence: and hence, the reverence of the multitude for civil authority should be incessantly cherished; and he who relaxes the bonds of allegiance, by inculcating doctrines flattering to the pride and turbulence of the populace, contributes, if not in the most effectual, certainly in the most malignant manner, to accelerate the dissolution of social order, and facilitate the conquest of anarchy over law. Besides, to the duty of submission there is but a rare exception: and to recommend the exception, and to slight the duty, what is it, save to discountenance that which is of great and nearly eternal moment, in favor of a distant, and doubtful contingency? Nor let it be thought that reserve, on these topics, must prove injurious to the liberty of the subject. Reserve cannot but be salutary, where temerity may be ruin. To teach men to be free, it is not necessary to instruct them to be licentious. And not only is it time enough to inculcate the legitimacy of resistance, when the oppression prevails which may make resistance virtue; but, at any
other

other period, opposition to the magistrate is rebellion, and the speculation which abets it treason.

It is, if possible, worse. Were it generally embraced, it would operate as a pestilence. It might, in some cases, indeed, intimidate cruelty and check oppression: but, in its common effect, it would prove more ruinous to the people, than restrictive of princes: and, by vesting in the first a discretionary power of deposing the last, it would often drive the last to the most violent and sanguinary counsels, and compel them to be tyrants indeed, in order to escape subjection to a democracy.

What is Government? If it be a mode of social regulation founded on compact, * then will it follow that the people have no pretence of right to form a government when they please. In this part there are two parties, whose common consent is necessary to its dissolution; † nor can
either

* See Locke on Government. This doctrine of civil compact was adopted and avowed by all the Whigs of 1688. Nevertheless many good writers, and Raynal especially (Hist. of the Eng. Parl. VIII. Epoch) have utterly rejected it; and, in my opinion, it leads to the most dangerous inferences; nor should I have made use of it here, if it had not been employed in a very different manner by the Modern Revolutionists.

† This is the express doctrine of the celebrated act of the 6th of Anne, chap. 7. That act maintains, and forcibly, that the King and Parliament have a right to alter the descent, inheritance, and Government of the Crown: but it maintains also, no less explicitly, that such alteration can be made only by their *common consent*.

I must

either of them justly infringe or annul, so long as the other shall continue to fulfil, it. It is, on the contrary, to be religiously observed and maintained by both: it is guarded by the faith of promises and the obligations of agreement, and the same reason which makes its abrogation a crime, will make its defence a virtue, whether in the Subject or the King. Defeasance, on either part, is political perjury: neither can be free if the other be bound; neither can be bound if the other be free: the maxim which diminishes the force of this momentous engagement, on the side of the people, weakens it no less, on the side of the monarch; and, almost without acception, popular insurrection and royal despotism stand on the same ground of legitimacy and of justice, and are equally criminal, or equally innocent.

My Lord, before we can properly engage in the subversion of any civil institution, many things are to be considered, besides the defects of the institution itself. That which, in existence, may cause some evil, may, in its ruin, give being to mischief far more extensive and deplorable. We must, therefore, proceed in the business of political subversion, with the most cautious diffidence. We must pause at every step, with the timidity

I must observe, however, that, in making this remark, I speak of a general rule, not an universal. The case of extreme emergency may possibly happen which would render it impracticable to obtain this *common consent*. But such a case must be of too rare occurrence, to affect, in any great degree, the propriety and wisdom of the principle laid down.

of the traveller who knows he is beset by countless difficulties and dangers. We must, against the hazard of the attempt, oppose the benefits which are to follow : we must take a retrospective and prospective view of things : we must weigh circumstances, ballance contingencies, estimate chances, and decide on probabilities : we must, in a word, act solely under the conviction that, if the risque of the innovation be not effectually to be compensated by the felicity of the consequence ; if the beauty and utility of that which is to be built up, offer not a decided recomppence for the expence and hazard of destroying that which is to be pulled down, — then must it be ruinous to acquiese in the destruction of any established government, and the favourers of revolution must be the foes of the state.

That the people, whenever they please, may promulge laws and frame government for themselves, is a position hostile in every respect to these obvious truths. It demands no patriotic consideration, no prudential caution, no patient deliberation, as a previous step in the business of revolutions. It is not levelled meerly at mischievous establishments, but is equally hostile to all establishments. It vests the rule of duty, not in the reason, but the inclination of mankind : and it authorises the populace, as far as it can authorise, to exercise their powers of destruction, not on occasions where the magnitude of the evil may vindicate the hazard of the enterprize, but whenever they are impelled by a weak, capricious and infirm will.

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I have said infirm. For what is the will of the people? It is, like the will of individuals, fallible and frail, and weak. The people, on great questions of state, never think for themselves. They are, frequently, but the passive instruments put in motion by the dexterity of designing men to promote the purposes of ambition : and a single Orator of subtilty and skill, can often command their ear and manage their passions, when the counsels of the wise and good will be heard but to be despised. We know what Mirabeau, and a few more of the same character, accomplished in France ; and we know what similar spirits repeatedly effected in Greece and Rome. History speaks but one language on the topic. It exhibits the multitude, as under the perpetual controul of eloquent demagogues. It describes the public will as the slaves uniformly led, governed and duped by the frauds and fallacies of turbulent sophisters, who have known how to impress, on the coin of falsehood, the fair semblance of truth. * Of
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* See Hume, vol. IX. p. 477. The instances of baseness, depravity and caprice in the democracy of Athens, are numerous and astonishing. In the wild and unstable government of that city, every thing seems to have been carried on by the bribery and influence of the Orators. And when nine innocent Admirals became the victims of popular fury ; when Socrates, the instructor and glory of Greece, expired in a Prison ; and when, in the persons of Plato and his followers, virtue, literature and taste fled from persecution and from Athens, there were but so many proofs exhibited
of

such a multitude, and of such a will, what can be said, but that they are uncertain and capricious; that they are subject to the influence of profligacy and fraud; and that they are easily to be led from truth and rectitude, even by those who are most interested to deceive, but least willing to instruct them? See, then, the guides on whose sovereign pleasure the ruin or maintenance of government is to depend! Behold the omnipotent and infallible masters of Constitutions and Laws! And tell me, if you can, what felicitous effects may not be hoped, when, to the controul of directors who are thus directed, every thing shall be submitted of civil import, the duties of allegiance, the reverence due to the decrees of the

of the power of demagogues over the passions of the people. Even petty bribes had their effect. Demosthenes, in his admirable speech, "De Corona," carefully enumerates the items of his liberality to his judges, in order to recommend his cause; and when the same sublime genius preferred his accusation against Midias, one of the arguments on which he lays the greatest stress, is drawn from the parsimony with which that criminal treated the populace to entertainments and shows. But Lysias affords a still more striking example of the base corruption of the Athenian multitude: for, to secure the popular favor to his client, he does little more than recount, with great exactness, the several sums he had expended for the theatrical gratifications of his auditors. Those sums amounted to ten talents, and thirty eight minæ. Lyp. Orat. XX. See also, Orat. XXIV. de Pop. Statu. and XXV.

the legislature, and the mode and permanence of human association. *

But, not merely because the public will is thus liable to error, and exposed to deception, is the theory false which would subject to it the regulations of polity, and the fate of nations. Order is the great source of common felicity ; but, without obedience to the laws, no order can be maintained. It is the interest of the people therefore, to be tractable and submissive, if they would be happy. They must regard the magistrate with respect. They must yield implicitly to subordination, and they must alike give to the Constitution its legitimate authority, whether affluence conduct them to enjoyment, or penury associate them with sorrow. Founded on any other principle, Government would be as unstable as a feather floating upon the billows. There would, in a little time, be no rule left for the political

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guidance

* But may not government be submitted to the controul, if not of the will, at least of the reason of the people ? Indisputably not, if by the reason of the people, be meant that of the numeral majority of the people. Government is a scheme of great complexity and extent, involving questions at once important and profound, and leading to discussions which refer alike to the present, the future, and the past. Such a scheme, I imagine, no numeral majority of the people, however convened, can possibly understand : and it should be remembered that they cannot without a crime, dabble with a system which is utterly beyond the reach of their comprehension ; and that their presumption in subverting it, can find no apology in the goodness of the motive with which they engaged in the subversion.

guidance of men. Coercion would lose its power. The impotence of coercion would become the establishment of licentiousness. Licentiousness would be speedily followed by tumult and anarchy : and these, once introduced, would consign all things, sacred and profane, to pillage and devastation.

Yes ! From the importance of the effects into which it issues, obedience to the Laws is an indispensable duty ; as the breach of it is an indisputable crime, from the extent of the mischiefs which it tends to produce. Of every individual, therefore, is allegiance required by the most solemn obligation ; and that to which each is bound, must be binding also upon all. Confederacy cannot alter the nature of things : it cannot make the resistance innocent in the whole, which is forbidden to the parts of which the whole is constituted. On the contrary, whatever extends the evil, increases the intensity of the crime ; and whatever is guilt in the unit, must be incomparably more heinous guilt in the million. There is nothing in the disunion or association of men, which can affect the force of moral restraint : Right and Wrong are no more changeable by a world than by a worm : and duty would still continue duty, though the Universe were to disclaim it.

These are the sentiments, my Lord, which the new race of Whigs have ventured to contradict ; and in opposition to which they have made the inclination of the people the rule of obedience : that is, they have made those whose duty is
 submission,

submission, judges of the degree in which they should submit ; have made the governor dependant upon the whim and volition of those whom the laws have appointed him to govern ; have made the institutes of the State subordinate to the passions for the coercion of which they were ordained ; and have subjected reason and obligation to the temper and spirit which they should eternally controul and regulate. But these are not the only errors and dangers which lurk in their system. When they assert the right of the nation to dissolve and reconstitute Government at pleasure, they, undoubtedly mean the majority of the nation. Let then, the majority be as ten, and the minority as nine. Are the first to be despots, because they are in number one more than the last ? are the last to submit to be slaves, because they are in number one less than the first ? And, after all, of what will this numeral, or, as they would say, omnipotent majority be composed ?—Of the *fæces Romuli* ; * the ignorant, the mean, the rash, and the depraved ; those who are peculiarly subject to the weaknesses of passion, and the ferocity of intemperance ; and whose counsels and views, if they should think a moment for themselves, will be the views of
 absurdity,

* Monsieur Melon, in his political Essay on Commerce, states, that if France were divided into twenty parts, sixteen would be the proportion of labourers and peasants, two only of Artisans ; one of gentlemen ; and one of bourgeois, financiers and merchants.

absurdity, and the counsels of caprice.* In the greatest number even of wise men, there will be the least wisdom; † but, of such a majority the reason will be error, the knowledge ignorance, the conduct riot, and the will phrenzy. Submit to its arbitration the most vulgar question, and it will hesitate without cause, or decide without integrity: but authorize it, with the Apostle of Liberty, and his associates, to pull down and build up constitutions at will; and you put the scythe of ruin into the hands of a tyrant, who will neither know where to commence demolition, nor where to end, and who will exhibit an emphatic commentary on the principles of his abettors, in the havoc, confusion, and chaos which he shall produce.

I now lay down the position as indisputably true, that the public will is to be led, and not to lead, to submit and not to govern; that no meer fiat of the people can authorize or justify a single act of political subversion; that duty is no less indispensable to States than to individuals; and that

* I never saw an assembly exceeding twenty (says a man eager to submit every thing to the will of popular associations) whatever the abilities of its members, that was not more disposed to passion and tumult, than reason and judgment. *Lessons to a young Prince*, p. 89. What expectation, then, shall we entertain of the wisdom of the numeral majority of the people, "of those who hold the plough, and glory in the goad, and whose talk is of bullocks?—Let not such be trusted in public council."—*Ecclesiasticus*. Ch. 38.

† Montesquieu, *Pers. Letters*.

that necessity alone, great, obvious and decided necessity, can vindicate the destruction of established governments, or legitimate popular resistance to the laws.

I go further. Were I asked whether government should be submitted to if restrictive of freedom, I would reply — certainly — unless the general happiness should be decidedly improveable by resistance. Even this, however, is a question not to be resolved by the will of the gross body of the people, but by the steady and deliberative reason of the wise. Whatever be the state of a nation, we may safely affirm, that political revolution is of all adventures the most hazardous. It reaches to the mind : has an immediate operation on morals, manners, habits, and modes : disturbs or destroys the established regulations of right and property : and is fraught with ambiguous consequences to generations living as yet but in the prescience of Heaven. What, then ? shall that which is thus doubtful and dangerous, be lightly or rashly undertaken ? shall the meer approbation of the people be sufficient to sanction and to justify it ? No ! — However concurrent may be the popular will, to attempt it solely on the authority of that will, would be the consummation of guilt : and the just and the temperate will be ever ready to maintain, that it should, even in cases of the utmost emergence, be the work only of slow and ruminating caution ; of reason which looks back and forward with accurate and active vision ; and of patriotism and virtue, which know no object but the common good. Such, at least, are the sentiments which we
read

read in the proceedings of the public spirited Defenders of Liberty in 1688. How long did those illustrious men confine the sword of resistance within its sheath ! How long did they endure oppression, before they renounced allegiance to the oppressor ! How long did they continue to estimate chances, and to weigh contingencies, before they made their final and solemn appeal to justice and to Heaven ! Did they not act as if they dreaded to moisten the laurels they prepared for Freedom, with the blood of a single foe ? Did they not proceed as if they thought each merited their solicitude, even in a contest which looked to all ? In what were they cruel, violent, rash ? Were their hands sullied by pillage, or their laws dictated by intemperance ? Or did they become negligent of the tyranny after the abdication of the tyrant ; or destroy the poise of the constitutional weights, under pretence of restoring them to their due ballance ?—Nothing like it—They hazarded not the least experiment which the most wary caution forbade. They risked nothing. They had secured victory, before they struck a single blow : and they were conquerors while James thought himself secure upon the throne. May their example live in the recollection of all future times : may their conduct continue, for ever, to instruct mankind in those wholesome principles of moderated zeal, of prudent enthusiasm, and of patriotic caution, on which they acted through the whole of a most eventful period : and may we imbibe at least so much of their spirit, as may avert our favor from rash and hasty novelties ; teach us to be as fearful
of

of doing ill, as earnest to do well; confirm our veneration of the antient laws and usages of the state; and fix the principle in our heart, that, in whatever concerns the order and form of government, our conduct is to be measured solely by our duty, and our duty is to be found but in prudence and justice.

That I have here carried the doctrine of obedience to a dangerous and unwarrantable height, will probably be asserted by the sanguine patriots of 1791. But, without descending to marshal the phalanx headed by Lord Somers, against these puny politicians, I assert, that the opinions I have maintained are peculiarly favorable to the liberties of the people. In the contrary tenets, indeed, I can see nothing but what must terminate in uproar and confusion. But the principle, that the obligations to allegiance are indissoluble, save by the last necessity, must prove very different in its operation. Wherever it prevails, it gives permanence to order, and stability to government. There no consuming hecatics, no feverish paroxysms, affect the state. Unalterable justice, not capricious will, becomes the support of magistracy. The laws are omnipotent. The monarch, informed that, by tyranny he will give existence to that case of extreme emergence, which liberates the people from the bonds of allegiance, will seek and find security in the legal exertion of his power: and the people, instructed that, until such a case shall occur, obedience cannot be withheld without a crime, will be less likely to rush, at the bidding of factious demagogues, into tumult and sedition. They will

not be deprived of the right of resisting oppression, though denied the pernicious privilege of deposing kings, and subverting government, at pleasure; as, on the other hand, kings will not be encouraged to oppress, though rescued from the evils annexed to a precarious authority, and rendered independant of popular caprice. All will be secure; the rulers from licentiousness, the ruled from despotism. Those fears will be no longer felt, which often urge the first, more forcibly than ambition, to forge fetters for nations: and those whispers will be no longer heard, which, by awakening the madness of the last, have frequently impelled them to insurrection and ruin. Sovereigns will learn that in moderation there is wisdom, and subjects experience that there is happiness in duty.

It might be thought, my Lord, that the writers who, in opposition to the sentiments here advanced, have endeavoured to deceive the people into a belief that their will and their duty are synonymous terms; treat practical wisdom designedly with contempt, and are assiduous only to gain credit by hazardous assertion, and outrageous paradox. But they have not paused even here. Their lust of revolution has impelled them much further; and after having, as they thought, argued away the obligations to allegiance, they proceed to complete the climax of enterprising sophistry, and to solicit the praise of folly by the artifices of fraud.

“ Former Parliaments had no right to legislate for a future people; ” or, in other and more plausible words, “ the dead had no right to legislate
for

for the living,*" — this little sentence they next promulgate, with all the pride of ingenious discovery. It seems to be their hope and stay; and contains, indeed, the sum of innovation. It may not, therefore, be unworthy of a moment's attention.

The surest test of political principle is its effects. State dogma may be very sagacious in theory, but prove egregiously pernicious in consequence. To be salutary, they must have a direct reference to time and place: to become practically useful, they must often lose a portion of their speculative excellence.

I enquire not, therefore, whether the doctrine that "the dead had no right to legislate for the living," be theoretically wise, or theoretically absurd. But I assert that, were it adopted by mankind, it would every where foster the worst vices, and the most audacious licentiousness. By dissolving the ties of authority and of precedent, it would effectually promote that spirit of innovation which, however, its particular object may sometime appear, is always dangerous. It would render the existence of law precarious and transitory; and not only destroy the efficacy of all the institutes of past ages, but urge every succeeding

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race

* See Rights of Man, p. 7. "The declaration of the Whig Parliament of 1688, as it refers to a subsequent generation, is a mere formality of words of no import." Idem, p. 9. "In making that declaration, they set up an assumed, usurped dominion; and were guilty of the same offence, under another form, for which James was expelled." Idem, p. 8. See, also, all the other Pamphlets.

race to annul the acts of the preceding, and to frame a new code for itself.

If the legislature of one period be not competent to bind the people of another, then should laws be made but for the day, or, at least, expire with their makers. Whereas, it is for the happiness of nations, that, when once wisely framed, they should be immortal, and possess, like Hebe, eternal youth. Were legislators to act under the influence of a contrary opinion, and to form institutes but for their own age, they would leave government a poor stipendiary on time and chance; and the public administration of affairs would possess neither that stability nor order, without which it must tend only to accelerate the public ruin. It is wise, therefore, to look to posterity in the fabrication of law. If cause and consequence be correspondent, a sound political system is the most valuable bequest of human wisdom: and to assert that men have a right whenever they please, to reject the salutary decrees of their forefathers, what is it but to assert that they have a right to disclaim utility, and to discard wisdom.

“ Did one generation of men,” says Hume,
 “ go of the stage at once, and another succeed,
 “ the new race if they had sense enough to chuse
 “ their government and their laws, which is surely
 “ never the case, might voluntarily and by general
 “ consent, establish their own form of civil polity,
 “ without any regard to the precedents which pre-
 “ vailed amongst their ancestors. But, as human
 “ society is in a state of perpetual flux, one man
 “ going every hour out of the world, and another
 “ coming

“ coming into it, it is necessary, in order to
 “ preserve stability in government, that the new
 “ brood should conform themselves to the established
 “ constitution, and nearly follow the path,
 “ which their fathers, treading in the footsteps of
 “ others, had marked out to them. Violent inno-
 “ vations are dangerous to be made even by the
 “ legislature. More ill than good is ever to be
 “ expected from them. And if history afford a
 “ few examples to the contrary, they are not to be
 “ drawn into precedent, and are only to be regarded
 “ as proofs, that the science of politics affords few
 “ rules which will not admit of some exception,
 “ and may not sometimes be controuled by fortune
 “ and by accident.”

The Whigs of the clubs deny all this; and, in
 order to destroy the authority of laws that come
 recommended to us by experience and custom,
 propagate opinions which, wherever admitted,
 cannot but exercise a corrupting influence. Infa-
 tuated men! did they perceive that their tenets
 afford a sanction to iniquity? Did they foresee the
 mischiefs which their sophistry is calculated to
 produce? Or were they solicitous to acquire the
 honour of instructing men to vindicate their
 crimes?—Trace their reasoning through its obvious
 inferences, and you would be tempted to reply;
 yes. For what is the sum and substance of their
 argument? If the parliaments of former ages,
 had no right to legislate for future, the laws they
 decreed are no longer binding: and if those laws
 be no longer binding, not only is rebellion against
 them innocent, but they cannot be enforced without
 injustice

injustice and oppression. What follows? That the best rules established by departed wisdom, have long since ceased to be legitimate; that the crimes which are forbidden merely by the codes of past generations, may be perpetrated without guilt; and that men may be guilty of treason to the state, without erring from the principles of civil rectitude, or meriting the condemnation due to traitors. Such is the logic of our new tutors; and such are the arms which they put into the hands of depravity. They speak, and laws, in their opinion, are no more: they sophisticate, and right appears to be commuted into wrong; they spin subtilties, and those subtilties tend only to demonstrate that legal coercions are no longer legal. Where they will pause in the exercise of this species of sagacity it would be hazardous to say: but the sagacity which is employed to annihilate the force of civil obligation, and to teach guilt to regard, as unconstitutional, the antient and most venerable institutes of the state, can confer little honor on any party, or be of little use to any cause.

My Lord, it is unnecessary to reason further against obvious error. Let us, then, advert to fact. The Constitution of England has invested Parliament with the power of legislation; and, therefore, whatever be the acts of any parliament, those acts must continue to operate, of right, on all succeeding generations, until a power equal and similar to that from which they rose, shall find it expedient and necessary to repeal them. If, then, the parliaments of future times continue
 silent

silent for ever; the laws enacted by the parliaments of former times, must continue to operate for ever; and it is upon this principle that, while some statutes are made to provide only against temporary evils, and are, consequently, endowed but with a momentary existence, others, formed from a nobler and larger view, are sent forth to "bind ourselves, our heirs, and our posterity for ever."

Nor is this doctrine peculiar to the British Constitution. The legislative authority of every nation, modern or antient, has exercised the same privilege. The zeal of Lycurgus to eternize his laws is well known: and the vehemence with which the national assembly of France have laboured to perpetuate their decrees: the oaths they have employed to protect them from innovation; and the tyranny with which they have enforced those oaths, sufficiently demonstrate their conviction that the institutes of one age may legally coerce another.

On this topic, no language can be adopted too explicit or too strong. I would, therefore, qualify even what I have said of that power of repeal which is lodged with parliament. — That the supreme sovereignty of the state may abrogate laws, and regulate and ascertain the succession to the crown, is readily admitted. This right was asserted by direct statutes, both under Elizabeth and Anne. But, so far is it from residing with the people and depending upon their will; so far is it from being unlimited in its application, or from warranting an abuse of the authority it conveys

conveys, that, by the legislature itself it is neither to be wantonly nor frequently indulged. It is to be exercised, not as fancy and passion may instigate, but as truth and wisdom shall direct. It is to be exercised, with sound discretion, and in conformity with the settled laws of the kingdom, the principles of Government, the obligations of morality, and the common happiness. It, therefore, affords no warrant for rescinding excellence, though it grant every privilege of reforming error. It points to amendment only.

Behold, then, the difference between the sentiments I have presumed to maintain, and those of our new Whigs. They submit every thing to the will of the people; I submit nothing.—They contend that the multitude are the masters of the laws; I insist that the laws are the sovereigns of the multitude.—They subject government itself to popular caprice; I describe it as dependant only on the institutes of the legislature.—They assert the perpetual and paramount supremacy of the many; I aver that they are paramount only in cases of rare emergence, when necessity dissolves the obligations of obedience.—They deny the right of the dead to legislate for the living, and, by consequence, the legitimacy of the greater part of our statute book, the whole of our common law, and the Constitution itself; whereas I affirm the legitimacy of all our existing laws; and that the living are indisputably bound to observe the decrees of the dead, until those decrees shall be cancelled by the wisdom of parliament. They, in fine, ascribe the right of repeal
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to the majority of the people, however that majority shall be ascertained or influenced, however small be its numerical superiority, or however wild its wishes and licentious its designs; but I feel myself wholly repelled from such extravagancies, and, instead of attributing the right of repeal to any number of men not legally convened, I maintain it belongs solely to the Legislative Assembly of the Nation, and is not to be exercised, even there, as will and caprice may prescribe, but as reason and utility shall direct.

Of sentiments so discordant, the public are now to judge, which breathe the most constitutional spirit, and are of the most wholesome import. Sufficiently have been discussed the doctrines of resistance and submission: and other principles demand examination.

By the party to which I have so often addressed myself, a multitude of secondary but auxiliary tenets has been brought forward, to afford occasional assistance to their heavier troops. But, by this effort, little has been gained. That the King, Lords, and Commons have no more existence than the spectres of a vision; * that the powers which sustain the weight of government are but idle fictions contrived to cheat and intimidate the public; † that nothing in England is what it pretends or what it ought to be; ‡ that the authority exercised by the Revolution Parliament of framing salutary laws for posterity, was

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* Rights of Man, p. 62.

† Idem, p. 3.

‡ Idem, p. 30.

no less tyrannical than the tyranny by which James lost the crown; * these opinions, and a thousand others like these, are but as the idlers which sometimes follow an army from the hope of plunder; and, being of no use in the day of battle, are no objects of war.

But the speculative fathers of these dogma, having so far, as they imagined, proceeded with success, now advance yet more hotly to the completion of their ideal conquest; and boldly insist that the boasted object of our veneration, the Constitution of England, is a jest and nullity. † To prove this paradoxical position, they have employed arguments, singular at least, if not cogent, and curious if not profound; but should their logic have been intended to convince, it must have miserably disappointed their hope; since it has taught men only to smile.

“The continual use of the word Constitution in England proves there is none. One member says this is Constitution; another member says that is Constitution; while the maintaining the debate proves there is none.” ‡ — Such is their first argument; and, if it be difficult of confutation,

* Rights of Man, p. 8. See also *Vindicæ Gallicæ*, Sect. the last.

† Lessons to a Young Prince, p. 49. 29. Rights of Man, p. 62. Doctor Price very nearly coincides on this subject with the most angry of his brethren. “For the Constitution of England,” he declares, “is chiefly excellent in form and theory.” Sermon, p. 44.

‡ Rights of Man, p. 62.

confutation, it is only because it is hard to be understood. That an object shall cease to exist, if the term which denotes it be often used, or often productive of debate, is, certainly a doctrine peculiarly novel and adventurous, and of which, therefore, some proof should have been attempted by the ingenuity of its authors. But what have these theorizing genii to do with proof? The position has been left utterly dependant on the penury of assertion; and whether, in this forlorn state it can authorize the singular inference which has been deduced from it, let common-sense reply.

Important conclusions should be drawn, with diffidence, even from incontrovertible premises. These gentlemen, however, have chosen to invert a rule so decided and plain. But be it at their own cost: nor let their wrath be kindled, if, when from the most feeble positions they deduce the most outrageous consequences, the world should recompence their folly with laughter, and their temerity with contempt.

That the laws and principles of the English Constitution should ever excite difference in debate, they think is strange. They are not astonished that every day instances should occur of altercation arising from the most trifling topics. They have known, without wonder, the attention even of the learned engrossed, and the sagacity puzzled, by discussions on the head of a snail, the procreation of a mushroom, or the rust of a coin. But they are amazed that the machine which, by a thousand contrivances of involution and complexity, happily direct the grand movements of a mighty empire, should not, at once,

be perfectly understood by every stripling in politics, and should produce, in controversy, the discordance of dispute, and the hesitation of doubt!

Let us argue, for a moment, on their own position, and see what would follow. The "continual use of a word," such is their assumption "proves" the non-existence of the object which the word denotes. Therefore, since philosophers frequently apply the names planet, and sun, there are neither suns nor planets in the heavens; and, therefore, again, since the world repeatedly uses the term faction, there is no spirit of faction even in Doctor M^c Kenna, or Mr. Paine! Thus the evidence of the senses of the judgment, may be put to defiance; and thus the objects of reality may be demonstrated to be but the phantoms of fancy!

Our Whigs however are not contented with having proceeded thus far. They proceed to assert that "the people of England have no Constitution, "because they cannot produce it in a written "and visible form." * Of this argument, nevertheless, I can, by no means, admit the legitimacy of the construction. It proceeds from cause to consequence with great rapidity, though both consequence and cause are but the shadows of assumption: and I assert, it is little more than the postulate of declamation, since, if salutary laws, and useful institutes; if an admirable system of politic œconomy, a plan of social regulation not to be surpassed in excellence and

* Rights of Man, p. 26.

and wisdom, and a series of rules for civil conduct, which practise and theory unite to extol; if these can justly be termed a Constitution, then have we a Constitution reduced to a "written and visible form," a Constitution such as no nation has ever yet possessed, and such as, in defiance of factious pens and discordant tongues, is every moment contributing to the prosperity and happiness of the empire.

If I be asked where these laws and institutes are to be found, my reply will be easy. Fact will supply every thing I want; and, without involving my answer in a multitude of words detached from meaning, I will refer the enquirer to our Courts of Justice where the laws are administered; to our Parliaments by whose voice they were enacted; and to the pages of our statute-books, to volumes of precedents, and histories of decisions, where they have been stored by the cautious hands of patriotism and of wisdom.

But, after all, is a written and visible form so necessary to the existence of an intellectual object, as this party have ventured to assert?—If it be, we can demonstrate, by the aid of such a datum, much more than the nihility of the English Constitution. Should there be any wisdom which has not yet assumed a "written form;" we can easily prove that it is no longer wisdom. Should there be countless truths which have not yet been made "visible" by the pen or the press; we can shew, in a moment, they are truths no more. According to this magical argumentation, knowledge

ledge must surrender a considerable portion of her most precious accumulations: nor is idea more than nothingness, until we give it a literal body, and open to it an asylum in the page of some protecting volume.

It is singular that, by their own position, the Whigs themselves should be the greatest sufferers. Hitherto the pamphlets of those illustrious personages have conferred little distinction on their authors. Some of them the works of hunger, and others the effusions of temerity, they all attest more vehemence than judgment, and more licentiousness than wisdom. If then, we suppose the writers, possessed of no knowledge but that to which, in those angry publications, they have afforded "a written and visible form," we must suppose them poor indeed: and they who have come forward with such voluntary zeal to communicate to the mind of England new truths and learned discoveries in the science of politics, must be regarded as the children of literary penury whose richest endowment is vanity not to be subdued, and presumption not to be cast down.

But these expert dialecticians continue. "A Constitution," they tell us, "is a thing antecedent to Government, and Government is the creature of the Constitution. Can Mr. Burke, therefore, prove the existence of the English Constitution." *—To define first at random, and, afterwards, to conclude of the reality of an existence but by its accordance with the definition, does not favor much of scholastic rigor.
No!

* Rights of Man, p. 26.

No! We have no such Constitution as we can suppose to have been formed before the existence of a Government amongst us; that is, before the people were refined from savages into men, and were taught, by necessity, to renounce licentiousness that they might secure freedom. We have no such Constitution, and we will have none such. We will not even qualify ourselves for obtaining the blessing. We will not renounce our laws; consign our civil and religious establishment to ruin; oppose, subvert, annihilate all order, all distinction, all polity; or, to say every thing at once, rush into a state "antecedent to Government," merely to institute a system similar to the phasm which these men have pictured; a system, after all, which opposed to our own, would be but as a pile suddenly erected by the rude skill of a multitude without restraint and without rule, compared with a palace raised, after countless struggles by the experienced wisdom and practised sagacity of successive ages.

I must, here, observe, my Lord, that, though the opinions and arguments to which I have just adverted, may be thought absurd, they are, nevertheless, peculiarly dangerous and pernicious. For to teach men they have no Constitution, is certainly to urge them to form one; and to urge them to form a Constitution, is, as certainly, to stimulate them to direct rebellion against all the existing laws. What indeed, if they had once thoroughly imbibed this singular lesson, would remain to check their career? Not their old respect for the old establishments? Not their once cherished attachment to the Constitutional code?

code? Not their early reverence of the institutes of their fathers.—By no means. For their zeal for reformation, they would speedily forget all this respect, attachment, and reverence. They would pull down the superstructures of wisdom with one hand, in order to raise up monuments to folly with the other: and very soon would be enacted that miserable but tragic farce which once filled England with sadness, when meanness and ignorance claimed the privilege of amending the state, and fanaticism and phrenzy assumed the reins of legislation.*

And where is it men are exhibited to themselves as slaves, without a Constitution? Where is it they are invoked to subvert Government, that they may frame a political system on a new plan, for their future regulation? Not, my Lord, as we might be tempted to imagine, where despotism draws tears of blood from the people, and converts empires into deserts: not where oppression scourges the arts and sciences from the land, and walks forth as a pestilence to prey upon the peace and comfort of mankind:

not

* “ When tinkers bawled aloud to settle
 Church discipline for patching kettle ;
 The oyster women lock'd their fish up,
 And trudg'd away to cry no bishop.
 The mouse-trap man laid save-all by,
 And 'gainst ev'l counsellors did cry ;
 Some cry'd the covenant, instead
 Of pudding, pies and gingerbread ;
 And some for brooms, old boots and shoes,
 Bawled out to purge the common-house.
 A strange harmonious inclination,
 In all degrees for REFORMATION.”

not where the frown of a tyrant scatters terror through nations, awes into prostration millions that should be free, and proves more desolating than the sword of war, or the incursions of famine. It is not, I say, in a country where the ear of a monarch is perpetually assailed by the wailings of servitude, mingled with the clanking of her chains; but in a country where sovereignty resides but in the law, and where the law is liberty and wisdom embodied in system; in a country justly proud of its privileges and rights; proud even of its penal institutes, which coerce some only to give freedom to all; proud of the fasces of its lictors which the guilty and licentious alone have reason to fear, and which are nothing save the instruments of punishment deposited by justice in the hands of her servants, to preserve the peace of the public, by intimidating its foes. In a nation like this it is, I repeat it, that wild politicians and selfish schemers inveigh against establishments in order to foment rebellion; in a nation which sees compounded in its Government the various excellencies of ancient and modern polity; in a nation where the numerous checks and controuls provided by the Constitution, frequently compel even bad men to act for the common good; in a nation advancing rapidly to the eminence of political prosperity and happiness, and of which nothing can retard the progress but the turbulence of disquietude, and the toils of faction. Of such proceedings let the patriots of the moment assert the honour, and assume the desert. The wise and the moderate will reject with disdain that desert and that honour.

The more violent are the ravings of sedition, the more firm will be their public-spirit : and, in proportion to the number and virulence of the enemies of the state, will be their zeal to range themselves under the banners of their country, and to repel the hostility which would strip it of its glory, and lay its noblest institutions in ruin.

In the two or three preceding pages, enough will be found to render it doubtful whether, of the characters I have presumed to arraign, the violence or the vanity be most predominant. While those characters attempt great things, they talk with as much confidence as if the spirit of destruction were certainly to issue from their lips, and to accomplish their hopes. But have they really the power of casting down, and building up political institutions at pleasure ? Is their ability so gigantic, and their strength so mighty as to secure success to their perilous enterprizes ? Casts forth their genius lightnings on their foes ; or exists that terror in their frown before which the advocates of law and government have reason to tremble !—The result will tell.—But, when I behold them labouring to undermine the Constitution ; to bring back the nation to a state of savage licentiousness ; and to enamour the populace of a system, which, in theory is illusion, as in practice it would be anarchy—when I see them undertaking all this, with persevering virulence and factious zeal, yet, hitherto, with no recompence but disappointment, and no victory but defeat ; I cannot, indeed, refuse to acknowledge the boldness of their efforts and the singularity of their designs, but I am not
to

to be persuaded that the world will deem worthy of any extraordinary praise either their sagacity or judgment, their integrity or public-spirit.

Perhaps, however, their glory or shame may be less than is imagined. It is supposed by a fanciful writer on the Origin of Evil, that "there are certain aerial beings privileged to deceive or torment us, for the ends only of their own utility or pleasure." Possibly, then, it is to these frolicksome tyrants we primarily owe the important theories advanced by the phalanx of self-nominated friends of the rights of man. From them, the raging invective, the soporific argument, the cloudy speculation, and the tortuous sophistry may have all issued. We but behold the work of their merry malice, it may be, in the clumsy censures which Doctor Priestly has levelled against the Church: in the anti-monarchical madness of Mr. Paine: in the labours of Doctor Price to transfer the crown of sovereignty to the populace: in the splendid vehemence, and censorious generalities of Mr. Mackintosh; * and in the volatile spirit with which the lighter troops of the faction scud from post to post, and dart their feeble javelins at every thing without reaching any thing. Of one pamphleteer these inspirers of evil may secretly have dipped the pen in gall; another they may have stimulated to distinguish himself by whimsical singularity of opinion; for a third they may have collected the various crudities which have been advanced by the innovators of former days; and

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* See especially the last section of *Vindiciae Galliae*.

a fourth may owe to them his hot zeal for polemic warfare, and an audacity not to be abashed even by defeat. But, should this be the case, where should the censure fall? On the real or nominal authors of the mischief? On the pretended statesmen who have assured us our Constitution is a shadow, and our Government an usurpation; or on that mischievous dæmonical fraternity who delight to make pretended statesmen their sport?

May I be permitted to make one observation more on this head? A Constitution, we are taught, cannot be formed but by a "regenerated people," that is, a people let loose from the restraints of policy, and the coercions of law.* Without dwelling on this tenet, which, in my opinion, contains an admirable epitome of the whole science of sedition. I shall only observe that the very reverse of it appears to be the truth.†

A Constitution,

* Rights of Man; *passim*. See also all the other pamphlets in favor of French politics.

† It has been asserted also in the same tone, that a "Government cannot reform itself:" Rights of Man, p. 28. If so, it may be overthrown, but can never be reformed. The Government which is denied the privilege of healing its own diseases, must be submitted to the power of the people; and the power of the people cannot be exercised, until Government be destroyed in all its functions and agency. For how can the people interfere, without first annulling the laws and subverting the magistracy which were instituted for their coercion? And how are the laws and magistracy to be subverted, without accomplishing the utter destruction of all Government?

A Constitution, whatever some may imagine, is a work of very wide extent, and very complicated design. It is to make provision for countless exigencies and wants; to open the sources of national prosperity; to ascertain the common and individual rights; to organize the power of states, and direct the mode of its exertion; and to render all happy, by coercing the vices and passions of each, by defending the property of the weak from the rapacity of the strong, and by securing justice to every man however humble, against every man however mighty. A scheme so involved, so vast, and so complex, is not within the conception of sudden deliberation, or instantaneous sagacity. To effectuate an object of such sublimity, many ages must be successively employed at an immense expence of toil and thought, of wisdom which sees beauty only in utility, of experience which has learned from the occurrences of the past to fore-judge the events of the future, and of talents and virtues all pointing, with the fidelity of the needle to its pole, to the peace, the prosperity, and the happiness of the world. Nor, in a system of this nature, and this difficulty, is every error to be its ruin. It may be reformed from time to time, without having recourse to a "regeneration of the people" into disorder and anarchy; it may be reformed by the assembled deputies of the nation, harmonizing in their councils with the other powers of the state, and acting with cautious timidity and deliberate discretion: with a zeal for the public welfare, tempered by prudence and conducted by judgment; and with that consci-

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ousness of their own frailty, which, without diminishing their eagerness to do good, renders them apprehensive of committing evil.

Such is our doctrine; or rather such is the doctrine which has been long the adopted doctrine of the state. For we have not derived our Constitution from the efforts of popular temerity and hasty zeal. No "regenerated people" formed it. It was not struck out at a heat by the sudden toil of assemblies without order and superior to controul. It rose not into existence at a period "antecedent to Government," when licentiousness, destroying the restraints of law, left all slaves either to others or themselves. Had it been established in this manner, we should have beheld in it nothing but the marks of error, the traces of precipitation, and a confused jumble of hazardous principles, huddled together by ignorance or by chance. For order we should have had chaos; for law confusion; for beauty deformity, and for wisdom folly: and, instead of what has been the glory of nations, we should have possessed what would have been their shame; instead of the noble tree under whose shade an empire can abide in peace, and whose fruits are abundantly sufficient to sustain the political wants of a mighty people, we should have had a baneful plant whose shade would have spread desolation wherever it fell, and whose fruits would have been to their consumers but concocted poisons. No! No! Our Constitution has had a different origin. It is the production of "many minds in many ages." It is a system embracing the accumulated knowledge and comprehensive wisdom

wisdom of consecutive centuries. As emergence, occasion, or liberty required, it has been augmented by new laws, or meliorated in its old institutes. Its errors have gradually yielded to the reforming care, not of a "regenerated people," but of an enlightened legislature. It has been progressively improved and beautified, as the state has advanced in manners and civilization, and become more worthy of freedom. * And, that it is the result of no sudden and tumultuary deliberation; that, as it rolled down from age to age, it daily acquired some new accession of dignity and excellence;

* What? Is not Freedom at all times equally the right of nations? It is. Man in fetters is no longer man. Slavery extinguishes his spirit, and associates him with meanness. But, though wherever there are men there should be Freedom, this Freedom should be proportioned to the virtues or vices of those who are to receive it. According to the depravity of a people must be their restrictions, and according to the number of their restrictions will be the extent of their Liberty. A sudden emancipation of a nation of slaves, would, in the end, prove the confirmation of their slavery. It would hurry them into licentiousness and disorder; and the licentiousness and disorder of the many, seldom fail to terminate in the despotism of the few. Freedom, therefore, should be progressive. A state will suffer no less from enjoying too much, than too little Freedom: and the most perfect Freedom on earth is that which, equally coercing the levity and passions of the multitude, and the pride and ambition of the magistrate, preserves the people precisely in the center of the two extremes, anarchy and oppression.

excellence ; that it has placed in the hands of the parliament it sanctions, the power of adding whatever else may be wanting to complete its perfection, without having recourse to the legislative sagacity of the multitude :—these are the circumstances which, though they have subjected it to the censure and reproach of the pretended abettors of the Rights of Man, have, in our opinion, most entitled it to praise, and most contributed to its glory.

But let it not be here imagined, that the opponents of this Constitution have displayed their enmity by speculations alone, calculated to stimulate resistance, and provoke rebellion. Had their factious zeal known any boundary, they would have thought it enough to urge us to the spoliation of kings ; to inform us that the obligations to submission depended entirely on the public will ; to point out and recommend the mode of reforming Government by destroying it ; and to declaim on the necessity of national regeneration, or, if you please, national anarchy and confusion, as the first step to be taken in the settlement and consummation of the “ rights of man.” But their hostility was not to be mollified by the promulgation of theories like these. They have proceeded with a wonderful attachment to system. And, after having instructed the people in the general principles of sedition ; instructed them that they may, on all occasions, repeal and enact, build up and destroy without a crime, they directly advert to the objects which, they think, the popular power should immediately give to ruin, as a sacrifice to the liberty and happiness of the nation.

And

And what are those objects? Our laws, our Institutes, our Government, our Constitution: for to all these have they repeatedly attributed defects gross enough to merit, and dangerous enough to demand the interposition of the people. But our ecclesiastical establishment, especially, has sustained the most pitiless invective; and, according to those who have lately honored it by their reproach, it is the disgrace and the degradation of the State. On this topic, then, some animadversion may be necessary.

I will not, here however, explain the nature, or vindicate the utility and importance of a Church establishment in general. I will not endeavour to prove, though to prove it would be easy, that the Church establishment of these countries in particular, is admirably calculated to preserve and diffuse religious knowledge—that, as it is intimately connected with the State, its maintenance has become politically requisite—that by setting apart a class of men for the study and propagation of Gospel truth, it directly retards the progress of vice and infidelity—that without it, there would be no certain and well-educated body prepared, for the instruction of the multitude, in morals and piety—that, by excluding from its ministry, all irregular and illiterate candidates, it prevents the degradation of worship, and provides, at least, for the decent and respectable performance of the ordinary offices of public teaching and public devotion—that, in establishing a maintenance for the Clergy, it only does what, were it totally destroyed, must be done in some other manner, but could not,

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probably, be done in any manner so effectual and unexceptionable—that, if it did not assign to its pastors certain revenues by authority of law, those pastors would be left dependant on the voluntary contributions of their hearers, or, to say the same thing in different words, on the whim and even number of their followers in their different parishes—and that, moreover, it rejects such voluntary contribution, because on that plan, the thoughtless, the covetous and the wicked would refuse to bear their portion of the general burthen; because it is pre-eminently dangerous to “present temptations of interest in opposition to the duties of religion;” because no reliance could be placed on the provision which was to be derived solely from the will and zeal of men; and because, were it left to the discretion of each district, whether it would maintain, or otherwise, a public instructor in religion, there would, in many places, be no such character maintained, and the influence of Christianity would proportionably decline.

These things I shall not now be solicitous to demonstrate; nor shall I attempt to show that, to take from the clergy the protection of a national establishment, and to leave them stipendiaries, with no reliance, save on the pity of the multitude, would be to depress, to vulgarize, to degrade, and to debase them;—to render their preaching in many instances, but a mode of solicitous supplication;—to subject them, at times to a servitude under insolent and ignorant directors, which could not be born, without a shameful degradation of character, and deterioration

tion of principle ;—to leave them at the mercy of their audience, and thus tempt them to accommodate their style, and doctrines in the pulpit, to the pleasure, perhaps, of a weak, and unlettered congregation ;—to take from them, every stimulus to noble exertion, every encouragement to useful erudition, every recompence which might awaken genius, and call forth talent in the cause of religion ;—to give them up to indecent strifes, to endless jealousies, and to that polemic and proselyting spirit, which is founded on views of secular advantage and private gain ; in one word, to deprive them of that generous independency, which is the parent of all virtuous pride, and elevated ambition ; which is as a soul to the soul, animating its powers, ennobling its designs, and quickening its efforts ; and without which no preacher can excell in that bold, dignified and commanding eloquence which is so frequently required to arrest the sinner in the midst of his career ; to depicture with effect the woes to which we are conducted by guilt ; and, in opposition to the wild misrepresentations of the sceptic, to exhibit Christianity, to exhibit that image of supreme wisdom, that immortal offspring of Heaven, in all her native and affecting loveliness.

Nor will I make any comment on the discredit and confusion which must follow the ruin of such religious institution as ours. Your Lordship, who can penetrate with such activity of vision through the glooms that wrap more difficult and complicated subjects, will not require to be now convinced by any length of detail, that, were

the Ministry of the Church to be limited, in the articles of support and direction, to the will of the multitude, it would become a profession equally precarious and humiliating; a profession which would be speedily occupied, not by men whose worth and wisdom would adorn it, but by those whose expectations were low, whose origin was obscure, whose knowledge was confined, and whose fervility was pliant.

On these points I shall, at present, be silent, from a persuasion that the general temper of my countrymen does not require the discussions to which they lead. But of the sentiments with which our speculating Whigs confessedly regard the Ecclesiastical establishment, I think it necessary to speak in open and explicit language. This will enable us to form a decided opinion of the designs of those enterprising zealots; and it will caution us to beware of the quarter where the stormy winds are secretly missing their wings and preparing to rush in tempests on the nation.

An old and experienced champion opens the case I have now to review. With a peculiar spirit of acrimony he alledges against the church all manner of religious evils which fancy could invent. It is, with him, the fertile mother of an whole progeny of mischiefs, of levity, scorn, heedlessness and atheism. It averts the sincere Christian from the public exercise of piety. It affords to the scoffer various topics of impious ridicule. It promotes the unhallowed cause of the sceptic and of the infidel; and is alike absurd
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in its doctrines, and superstitious in its ceremonies; alike repulsive of the good, and offensive to the wise. *

This black catalogue of Ecclesiastical vices and enormities, a succeeding writer has not failed to enlarge. According to him, we are once more in danger of the flames of Smithfield: Our religious polity is the polity of persecution: and, in fine, to the united influence of Church and State,
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* In the well known discourse on the "Love of our Country," the discourse of an Orator inebriate with enthusiasm and with zeal, the author vehemently complains of the melancholy neglect which prevails in the discharge of the public duties of religion. But what does he inform us is the source of this neglect? Not the luxury, dissipation, vice, scepticism, which are gradually destroying all the seriousness of the world, but—"the defects and absurdities of our established codes of faith and worship. In foreign countries," he continues, "the higher ranks of men, not distinguishing between the religion they see established, and the Christian religion, are generally driven to irreligion and infidelity. The like evils are produced by the like cause in this country: and if no reformation can be brought about in our established formularies, it must be expected that religion will go on to lose its credit, and that little will be left, except among the lower orders of the people, many of whom, while their superiors give up all religion, are sinking into a barbarism in religion lately revived by Methodism, and mistaking, as the world has generally done, the service acceptable to God, for a system of faith souring the temper, and a service of forms supplanting morality."

the nation owes the decline of her trade, and the exile of her manufactures. *

Bold however, as this accuser may be thought, he has not, at least directly ventured to assert that, in these countries, a single individual has reason to complain of religious coercion. He well knows that every sect and every worshipper is free to adopt whatever liturgy the voice of conscience approves. But what of all this?—Religious toleration, he is ready to show, instead of affording a proof of religious liberty, demonstrates, wherever it exists, the abject thralldom of the people. For toleration, he assures us, is, by no means toleration. “It is the counterfeit, not the opposite of intolerance, and both are despotisms:” * that is, it is despotism to close the door of a conventicle against any man, and it is despotism also to fling it open to the world!

Thus that two contradictory terms are synonymous; that the church which tolerates all religions, tolerates none; and that liberty of worship is only another name for religious persecution, are the maxims of this writer. But the learned inventor of paradoxes so ingenious and acute, has not, I think, been quite assiduous enough to explain or to enforce them: and they had

† Church and State are driving the cotton manufacture to America. Rights of Man, p. 37.

* Toleration is not the opposite of intolerance but the counterfeit. Both are despotisms. Idem, p. 34. Toleration places itself between the being who worships, and the being who is worshipped; and in tolerating man to pay his worship, it presumptuously sets itself up to tolerate the Almighty to receive it. Idem, p. 36.

had scarcely escaped from his lip, when he resigned the stage of altercation to a brave coadjutor, who approaches the object of his wrath, with the confidence of the Philistine, when he issued from his tent against the beardless champion of Israel.

Illi quicquid movere magna merces videbatur.

Long skilled in the use of polemic weapons, and conversant in the art of subduing enemies by loquacity whom he could not reach by argument, this new combatant brings from the arsenal of Presbytery, every subtilty and every artifice which he conceived might be useful in his warfare with the established Church. But what strength of argument does he lead to the field.

——— *Quibus indiciis, quo teste, probavit?*
Nil horum. Verbosa et grandis epistola venit.

He produces an host of epistles, each of which his confidence regards as mighty in strength and resistless in battle. He carries on his attack by every means which declamation, reproach, and invective could supply. He endeavours to undermine the structure of our Ecclesiastical polity by logic: he flatters himself he shall shake it by the lightnings of wit; and he labours to overwhelm it with a torrent of words. But, alas! to what end? His torrent in the event, has the force but of a babbling stream: his lightnings are only the coruscations of a meteor: and his logic is nothing more than literary imbecility.

He seems, however, to entertain no moderate idea of his own prowess. With all the violence
of

of unqualified wrath; in language too haughty to be decorous, and too vehement to be just; and with a temper unchecked by prudence, deficient in policy, bold, rash, ill-honoured, and morose, he has accused, and criminated, and condemned every thing which in the slightest degree, is affianced to a Church establishment. All such establishments he thinks "very mischievous." * "However they appear to Mr. Burke, they appear the extreme of folly to him." † "They are alike useless to the poor and to the rich:" ‡ and they are not only injurious to religion, but incumbrances to a State, retardive of its prosperity, and unfavorable to its freedom. §

Impressed with such sentiments, he naturally exults that "the generous spirit of the Scots has thrown off the oppressive yoke of a Church establishment." || But "joy never comes without its badge of bitterness:" and his exultation is soon converted into sorrow — Why? — Because "the Irish, though they have the will to do so, "have not, alas! the power:" ¶ that is, have

* Letters to the Right Honourable Mr. Burke, p. 42.

† Idem, Ibid.

‡ Idem, p. 44.

§ Idem, p. 44. His words are "such an establishment is in general, a great incumbrance to a State, and highly unfavorable to its liberties."

|| Idem, p. 48.

¶ It is obvious that, when he so pathetically sympathizes with the Irish, he means only the Irish Roman Catholics. This, indeed, the whole tenor of the context confirms. See the Letters, p. 48.

have not the power to destroy an institution, which, according to him, they detest, and to consecrate upon its ruins an altar to the Pope. *

You

* I am sorry to observe that the same pretended union of Presbyterian with the Roman Catholic, has taken place in Ireland also. A spirit therefore, has been fomented in that kingdom, disquiet from turbulence and furious for change. Various clubs have been formed by the associated parties, for the purpose of accomplishing their common schemes. From these clubs papers daily issue of the most factious tendency; and these papers are speedily transmitted to all the new Whigs of the kingdom, to urge violence to effort, and presumption to treason.

I must further remark, that the rights and immunities claimed by the Presbyterians for the Roman Catholics, and by the Roman Catholics for themselves, are very numerous: they have been claimed, nevertheless, not as favors to be conferred by the benevolence of Parliament, but as so many rights which it is only justice to grant, and which it is iniquity to withhold. Whether they should be yielded, however, to those who demand them with so haughty a tone, is, now, with the Legislature to determine. But that they are almost all of a political nature; are involved with very serious and momentous difficulties; and should neither be lightly required, nor incautiously bestowed, who will deny that is not deceived or instigated by the artifices of faction?

Considering the state of Religion in this country, it is sufficiently plain, that before the Roman Catholics can be indulged, as their Presbyterians allies have taught them to wish, many questions of no small magnitude must arise, and be discussed. Former and

L

general

You smile, my Lord; yet it is fact. The Doctor of Birmingham has thus benevolently con-
doled

general prejudices are to be removed; laws which have long subsisted, and whose utility has been proved, are to be annulled; doubts, founded upon strong and rational prepossessions, are to be satisfied; and revolutions in our jurisprudence, are to be made in such a manner, as, while they prove the liberality of the Legislature, may demonstrate its wisdom also. A business of this kind, in its nature so embarrassing, so complex, and so hazardous, is not to be the work of a moment. It should have nothing to do with any temporary or factious phrenzy. It should be carried on by slow degrees, so that prudence and policy may keep pace with humanity and benevolence,

But this, it seems, is too tardy a mode of proceeding for men who would drive the State into an acquiescence with what they term "a general emancipation." They would, at once, dash down every barrier which the wisdom of our ancestors erected for the preservation of themselves, their posterity and their country; they would by one rash and hasty blow, destroy the land marks of former times, and new model the Constitution by an indiscriminate admission of every sect and every order to a share of the legislative power; they would render Parliament but as a piece of tesselated joinery, of clumsy Mosaic, in which all human contrarieties would be brought together, without skill or beauty; and they have even rejoiced to anticipate the day when a Roman Catholic House of Commons will sit to bind a Protestant nation, with Roman Catholic Laws. (See Rights of the Roman Catholics considered. Published at Belfast.) But, *festina lenté.*

doled with the Church of Rome : his ceaseless hatred to a Protestant Episcopacy, has reconciled the

lente. There is no wisdom in intemperance ; and to demand too much is to risque every thing.

For many years the Roman Catholics of the kingdom have acted with much prudence and moderation ; and it will be granted, I believe, that they have received many great indulgencies and important privileges since the commencement of the present century. A liberality of sentiment, a mutuality of affection, and a spirit of benevolent philosophy have been gradually drawing them closer to their Protestant brethren : and there was reason to hope that all the antient prejudices and animosities which separated them from the other members of the State, would be soon forgotten for ever. But of some of their own partizans it seems to have been the determination to destroy this hope ; for violence and rancour have been unhappily substituted for growing philanthropy, and decent moderation ; and a pretended zeal for political liberty, and faction denominated attachment to the cause of civil and religious freedom, have laboured with some appearance of success, to open anew the wounds which time and policy had almost healed.

In the course of all this business, abuse has been lavished with a most unsparing hand. If the Protestants, wishful to preserve the ascendancy, listen with caution to the demands of their brethren, they are to be termed a cruel and bigotted body, and branded with every appellation which the fancy of faction can invent. If the Roman Catholics mingle menaces with their petitions, and threaten, as some of them have done, to enforce their claims by something more weighty than words, they are to be described as actuated solely by a

the well known antipathy of his Order to a Popish hierarchy : and it is the glory of these days of illumination, to witness the confederacy of contradictions ; to behold the disciples of the Old Jewry weeping for the diminished power of the Conclave in Ireland ; and to hear Papal wishes issue from Presbyterian lips.

But these are only lighter shades in the Ecclesiastical picture delineated by the pencil of this universal Doctor. After having carelessly touched a variety of topics ; arraigned the majority of the Lords and Commons as enemies to Christianity ! indulged the generous feelings of his heart in politely complimenting himself and his Order, on their common respectability ; accused Mr. Burke of random ignorance, of obvious error, and of unfounded assertion ; and thus displayed the felicitous diversity of his genius, in a most singular medley of lucubration, complaint, retort, eulogy and invective,

spirit of liberty, which seeks but to burst their fetters, and by a zeal, which, contrasted with the selfishness of their opponents, is honesty and wisdom. But are the Protestants the only party to be censured ? Is there no animosity, no violence, no rancour in those who condemn them ? Or, are they alone bigotted and fraudulent who would maintain the existing constitution ; and they alone pure and immaculate who would destroy it ?—I mean not, however, indiscriminately to arraign the whole body of the Roman Catholics and their Friends. Of that body some have been wise enough to repose their hopes on moderation ; and Lord Kenmare, Sir Patrick Bellew, and their common friends, have especially merited the praise of the rational men of all parties.

veſtive, he proceeds with augmented violence to compleat his great work of clerical degradation. But, in this attempt, he appears no longer the grave and ſober Polemic, who is conducted by diſcuſſion to inference, and by argument to truth. He is now ambitious to diſplay other powers than thoſe of reaſoning. He is a political Ovid, who, having firſt teized his foe by vanity of transformation, prepares to prove his prowess by cruſhing that foe into nothing.

Behold, then, the Church eſtabliſhment, that object of Proteſtant reſpect and Proteſtant hope ; that pillar in the great edifice of the State, which we had vainly ſuppoſed was too much for the arm of all the Sampſons of the Preſbytery, changed, in a moment into ſucceſſive forms, of various and contradictory denomination ;—behold it, I ſay, alternately exhibited on the ſcene, under the figure of a Fungus, a Paraſytical-plant, a Glutton, and a Sloth ; to the aſtoniſhment and delight of the ſons of Hackney. Nor think this is all. The wrath of the forcerer is to be appeaſed not merely by the efforts of magic which metamorphoſes, but of might which deſtroys. Hence the object of his vengeance, after having been changed from ſhape to ſhape, with ſuch ſportive cruelty, he is “determined not to ſpare.” “It deſerves no mercy :” and he, therefore, profeſſes himſelf already prepared, “to extirpate the Fungus, deſtroy the Sloth, and kill the Glutton ;” or, in plain terms, to overthrow the eſtabliſhment which he has ſo poetically repreſented by that excreſcence and thoſe “vermine.” Yes, my Lord ; he has
even

even now annihilated it in fancy ; and he will accomplish his wishes when confidence shall be execution, malevolence conquest, and vanity power. *

These

* “ This establishment may be compared to a Fungus, or to a Parasitical plant, which is so far from being coeval with the tree on which *it* has fastened *itself*, that *it* seizes upon *it* in *its* weak and languid state, and if *it* be not cut off in time, will exhaust all *its* juices and destroy *it*.”—Shame on these *its*!—“ So far,” the Doctor continues, “ is a civil establishment from being friendly to Christianity, that *it* may be compared with the animal called the Sloth, which, when *it* gets upon any tree, will not leave *it* till *it* has devoured even the leaves and the bark, so that *it* presently perishes. Rather *it* is the animal called the Glutton, which, falling from a tree in which *it* generally conceals *itself*, upon some noble animal, immediately begins to tear *it*, and suck *its* blood, and if *it* be not soon shaken off, which every effort sometimes fails to effect, *it* infallibly kills *its* prey.”—These *its* again!—“ Now when I see this Fungus of an Establishment, upon the noble plant of Christianity ; draining its best juices ! when I see this Sloth upon its stately branches, gnawing it and stripping it bare ; when I see this Glutton upon the shoulders of this noble animal, the blood flowing down, and its very vitals in danger, if I wish to preserve the tree or the animal, must I not, without delay, extirpate the Fungus, destroy the Sloth, and kill the Glutton ? Indeed, Sir, say or write what you please, such vermine deserve no mercy. You may stand by, and weep for the fate of your favorite Fungus, your Sloth, or your Glutton, but I shall not spare them.”—Letters to
Mr.

These indefatigable subduers of "vermine," however, have not rested their cause on general invective. With the bitterness of Knox,* when fulminating his religious thunders in Scotland against those whom he terms a worthless, insignificant, and despised race; they have directed their wrath from things to persons, and have indeed exhausted the vocabulary of virulence in defamation of characters set apart as the institutors of the public mind, and whose business it is to extend the sacred influence of truth and of religion. And yet, had they looked, for a moment to the individuals of that body whom they affect to scorn, they would have found not a few of worth sufficient to shame calumny into silence. They would have seen in those whom they have reviled, morals, diligence, capacity, and learning: and an Hurd, a Porteus, a Watson would have occurred at once to remind them of the falsehood of their accusation, and the licentiousness of their reproach. Or, if
such

Mr. Burke, p. 66. 67. Of this passage, I know not which most deserves to be admired, the energy and correctness of the expression, or the beauty and propriety of the imagery. It speaks, indeed, in confident and haughty language. But, possibly, its author might have imagined, that presumption was the test of genius, and that modesty is the virtue but of ignorance and imbecility. If so, I would presume to admonish him, that to talk like a Giant is very different from possessing his power; and that the most violent invective is frequently found to issue from the lips of a Dwarf.

* Knox, p. 133. 134. 237. 238.

such as these did not exist to exhibit to them the virtues exemplified in action, would they not have discovered, in the head of the Irish Clergy, enough, to have redeemed the church from their censures, and their malignity? What munificence, what wisdom, what integrity of life dignify and distinguish that exalted character! Does he preside over a diocese of primary importance and extent?—He presides with a vigilance which sees and provides for every thing. Does he enforce ecclesiastical order, and residence?—He enforces them with a firmness compounded of steadiness and philanthropy. Does he confer promotion! He confers it not with an hand that lavishes, but with a sagacity that discriminates. Does he aim at extending the holy influence of religion?—He displays in the pursuit of his purpose a judgment that regulates the zeal of piety, and a piety that ennobles the views of judgment. Behold a regular conscientious and respectable Clergy scattered over an extensive district.—Behold glebes purchased, and glebe-houses erected through an whole country. — Behold a village swelling into a city, and increasing rapidly in population and trade.*—Behold palaces and libraries constructed, alike expressive of liberality and taste, and equally beautiful and useful.—Behold multitudes employed in works of munificence, who, but for such employment, might, in many instances, seek in vain their daily bread.—Behold Observatories raised up, and Colleges enlarged, with a spirit which perpetually looks to public good.—

Behold

* Armagh.

Behold, I say, new temples dedicated to the Almighty, the steeple rise, and the spire ascend, and the congregation assemble, and the Gospel honoured, and the Eternal adored, where before the unhappy flock was left to ramble without a shepherd; where devotion, if there was any devotion, issued from the lips but of bigotted ignorance, or superstitious enthusiasm; and where the voice of genuine religion was, perhaps, never heard, or heard but to be despised—behold all this, and you will recognize but the works of his hands, but the marks of his beneficence, but the evidences of his philanthropy, but the demonstrations of his pastoral diligence and zeal. I speak not, however, of his mind what I think it is, I speak of it only in the language supplied by deeds. He whose conduct tells us that his pride is virtue, and his hope is heaven; he who lives to die, that he may die to live; he whom even enemies praise, and whom friends venerate; who has shewn that station may be enjoyed without kindling envy, and excellence displayed without provoking malevolence; and who, knowing that greatness detached from desert, is only a fantastic creature of the imagination, adds to eminence of rank, pre-eminence of worth;—such a man possesses a panegyric which would render that of a Pliny worse than superfluous; a panegyric which speaks with the energetic eloquence of actions, and which, if it found not to the ear, is felt and assented to by the heart. It was to have been hoped, then, that the various excellencies of this nobleman, universally known and acknowledged

as they are, would have proved sufficient in some degree, to mollify the asperity, or to silence the satire of those who have lately defamed his function and his order. But to be a pastor of the Established Church seems to have been enough to cancel in their eyes all his merits; and they have left him, without compunction, to participate with the rest of the Clergy of that church, the general invectives which they have glanced at his profession.

And have they substantiated their charge? Have they been half as liberal of proof, as they have been prodigal of censure? Have they brought forward even a single fact to corroborate a single accusation? Nothing like it. Forgetting what they owed to themselves, in their zeal to consign others to obloquy; forgetting that slander is never more odious and criminal than when she fastens upon a whole body; they have earnestly and often reprobated the Clergy of the Established Church, and pronounced against them a condemnatory verdict, which, though nothing could, in any degree, authorize it, save the most obvious and deplorable criminality, has, nevertheless, been left utterly dependant for its justification on general, fallacious, and unfounded assertions.

According to these self-appointed judges in the courts of scandal, what is that Clergy?—What, but “a body sinking fast by its corruptions into contempt;”—a body “not only possessing no influence on the upper classes of life, but wholly neglected by them;”—a body “utterly heedless of its proper duty, and of all decent morals;”—a body, in
a word,

a word, "more despised than any other religious order in Christendom," however superstitious and depraved, however insignificant or noxious.*---Of the justice of this representation some proof certainly was required. I ask, then, has any been advanced? --- There has!---Such a one as you might expect would be offered by those who labour only to erect the structure of slander upon the dogma of assumption, without recollecting the fate of him who built his house upon the sand, and saw it speedily overturned by the winds and floods.

Such are the sentiments, the threats, the designs, and the conduct of these modest men; such are the charitable tenets which they openly avow, and publicly maintain. In this, particularly, they have scorned to involve their principles or their inclinations in the mists of obscurity. "They water their couch with tears, and their beauty is gone away for very trouble," because they "cannot confound their enemies, and put them to shame suddenly, and lay their honour in the dust." They, nevertheless, shew themselves armed and accounted for battle. "They speak all manner of proud things." "They imagine mischief in their hearts;" and they fearlessly declare the mischief they imagine. What is their object in all this? Is it tranquillity or discord? Have they the confi-

* Priestley's Letters to Mr. Burke, p. 55, 56, 58. I shall soon have occasion to quote a few more passages still more defamatory and licentious than those to which I have here referred.

dence to suppose they possess the horn at the sound of which the walls of Jericho are to fall? Or is it their hope that, by the potent magic of a few daring sentences, they can new form our tenets, and new mould our polity, according to the wise model of their own contrivance?---“Of all the audacity by which nations or individuals have been provoked, that of these men is certainly one of the most extraordinary instances*.”

On these topics, however, it is not necessary to dispute. The party has said enough to convict itself. I shall, therefore, only submit to the consideration of my countrymen, whether they who are allowed to speak and to act with such audacity, can be said to be imperfectly tolerated by the State, or to be tyrannically circumscribed in the exercise of the “Rights of Man?” Whether it is just to alledge that they are not privileged to serve God as they please, merely because they are not permitted to do what they like? Or whether they have reason to accuse the Church of persecution, because they are not enabled to reduce the wild theories of innovation to practice; to regenerate, as they term it, the law and the state; and to demonstrate their detestation of the mitre by insult, outrage, and oppression?

Tolerate them as they wish: in plain language, gorge their ambition with power, till, if possible, it shall be compelled to say, enough!—what shall follow?—Strange novelties and whimsical alterations, if they do not utterly despise consistency.

* Rights of Man.

That which they have so often reproached and reprobated, they will then naturally delight to humble and abase. That which they now detest, they will then destroy. Their presumptuous menaces will issue into correspondent actions: and the language of subversion will make way for the enterprizes of revolution.

Every man to his tent, O Israel ! The Church is a nuisance. Persecution is abroad. We are slaves*. Thus do they inform the world of their grievances, and thus do they call upon the world for redress. Are they then, in reality, the Helotæ of the land? Are they indeed oppressed by the laws, and insulted by the magistracy? Is the gate of the tabernacle closed against them; and does intolerance dictate their creeds†?—Their conduct,

* “ The people of this country will at length discover that what they have paid for so dearly as a benefit, is really a nuisance, hostile to the clearest truth, and subversive of rational liberty.” Priestley’s Letters to Mr. Burke, p. 59.

† When they talk of toleration, it is curious to observe their contradictions and inconsistencies. Even Doctor Price has been evidently embarrassed by this topic; and, when it engages his attention, his denials and affirmations of the same facts crowd so fast upon each other as to be almost sufficient to provoke laughter. “ At the Revolution,” says he, “ we the Protestant Dissenters obtained the liberty of worshipping God in the manner we think most acceptable to him. It was then our meeting-houses were opened; our worship was
“ taken

duct, their language, their temerity demonstrate the contrary : demonstrate that they are free, even to licentiousness, and fearless even to audacity. Nor, while we behold their invective let loose at the noblest quarry ; while we behold them brandishing in their very pulpits, the thunderbolts of wrath ; while we behold them sacrificing prudence and policy to outrageous zeal, and vindictive violence, are we authorized to conclude that they are abused by persecution, and unfriended by the nation : but that they are men of little moderation, and no restraint ; hurried away by the impetuosity of a republican temper ; frantic for pre-eminence over Church and State ; and, in the language of Swift, “ well inclined to pull down our present establishment of monarchy and religion*.”

To

“ taken under the protection of law, and the principles “ of toleration gained a triumph.” Love of our country, p. 37. Nevertheless, what are his sentiments immediately after ? — “ The toleration gained at the Revolution was imperfect : and it included only those “ who could declare their faith in the doctrinal articles “ of the Church of England.” What ? though “ the “ Protestant Dissenters had obtained the liberty of worshipping God in any manner they think most acceptable to him ?” Love of our Country, p. 40.

* They, indeed, confess they are so, in a thousand places. Regarding “ all priesthood as fervently devoted when weak, dangerously ambitious when strong ; in feebleness dangerous to liberty, and in power dangerous to Government.”

To these painful but important conclusions, they themselves conduct us. They admonish us,

Government."—Mackintosh, p. 42.—It is impossible they should not be zealous to destroy the order, and to contribute by all their efforts to its downfall. But, as I have, in this article, spoken in strong language of the temper and designs of the party, I will burden one page more with some additional quotations to convince the Reader that, if my imputations be forcible, they are abundantly merited. "In our Church Establishment," say they, "there is no appearance of any regard to Religion. Religion is always injured by such establishments. Why are we labouring at the subversion of all establishments? Are not the poor Irish driven almost into annual rebellion by oppression from the exaction of tythes? This is the true cause of the rising of the White Boys. The Methodist Ministers are christianizing that part of the people which are below the attention of your dignified Clergy. The attention of the established Clergy to the Great is servile and debasing; they connive at their vices and extravagances, while they have the care of their education both at home and abroad.—You, Mr. Burke, must hold them in contempt as much as I do.—The Civil Establishment of Religion makes it contemptible—the Clergy of England and France have been considered as unbelievers; and the Church of England is not exempt from the same censure.—The consequence of a Church Establishment in England has been the utter contempt of Christianity in men of rank and fortune." See Letters to Mr. Burke, p. 48, 61, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 84, 91, 102, &c. See also *Vindicia Galliæ*, sect. the last. Would not these passages authorise the severest commentary?

before

before hand, to beware. They tell us openly they are frantic for revolutions: and their menaces, at this period of imbecility, abundantly instruct us in the evils and mischiefs which would result from their acquisition of power. We thank them, my Lord, and trust we shall profit by the warning voice we have heard. We trust the spirit and firmness of Government will be its defence against the avowed hostility of its foes. We trust impotence will be long the lot of those who have so candidly announced the objects to which they would apply authority; and that, if it be intolerance to prevent the consummation of their threats, the state will continue intolerant for ever. Such are our hopes. They are our hopes, because we dread the subversion of establishments which have borne the test of ages; because we would not give up our laws to the scythe-like pruning-hook of ignorant zeal, and thoughtless or plotting precipitation; and because we fear to meet the moment when a giddy faction shall become predominant, and peace, like the wandering dove, shall forsake the nation; and forsake it, perhaps, for ever*.

I have

* If, in what I have advanced, I should be thought to have thrown any injurious imputations on the body of Presbyterians at large, let it be remembered that the premises from which I have inferred my conclusions, are literally those of their own friends. Of that body many, I am persuaded, are persons of real integrity. It has produced characters, who have eminently contributed

I have only further to observe, on this subject, that, when a body of men disclaim the government

tributed to the advancement of sound and substantial knowledge, and to the illumination of mankind. Its clergy are, in various instances, respectable for ability and worth; men whose morals and learning would embellish any station, and who, though they may be somewhat marked by the "esprit de corps," may be regarded, according to the expression of the Bishop of Landaff (Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury), as the leaven which preserves a large portion of the people from extreme corruption. I mean not, therefore, to impute evil principle to the general body of the Presbyterians, further than as they embrace and give sanction to the ruling sentiments of those who would be their leaders. My intention has been chiefly to comment on the conduct and tenets of certain restless and turbulent individuals of the sect, and of their dogmatizing and hasty followers; nor can Doctor Priestley, especially, have any reason to complain of this proceeding, since, if I had followed his example, I should have been profuse of censure; I should have added asperity to detail, and invective to remark; I should have even arraigned and condemned the character of his clerical brethren, and described it in the same shameless and illiberal style in which he has depicted the National Clergy. But what would have been my acquisition, had I adopted the censorious freedom of this meek and merciful philosopher? I might possibly have caught the ear of the weak, and I might have made partizans of the worthless; but I should have been despised by the wise, and the candid, and the moderate, and the just; by the most

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respectable

ment and constitution, under which they live, it is wise and necessary to discourage the growth of

respectable part of the community, those whose praise alone is worth the wish of an honest man, and who regard truth as the foundation of virtue, and equity as the source of honour.

I have always entertained an high idea of Doctor Priestley, as a patient and diligent scholar. But as a statesman, he seems to be governed rather by party views, than a generous zeal for the common good: and as to charity—that first of virtues, which he who loses, loses himself—he appears frequently to have given it up to political phrenzy. This serious charge is founded on the following particulars:

I will not here mention his acknowledged detestation of the Church Establishment; the grossness with which he accuses the Ministers of that Church of ignorance, immorality, indecency, and infidelity; the zeal with which he ascribes the growing scepticism of the times, to the heedlessness and corruptions of the Protestant Clergy; the violence with which he attributes to an whole order, the most shameless connivance at extravagances and vices, which it is the bounden duty of that order to reproach and repress; and the indefatigable diligence with which he has toiled to propagate sentiments that have an immediate tendency to excite turbulence and to promote faction. These are facts which the preceding note will in a great degree confirm, and which his Letters to Mr. Burke lay open to the observance of every candid and serious man. I turn then, directly, to his address of affected moderation, but real malevolence, on the riots of Birmingham.

After

of their power and their strength. In such a case, to keep them at a distance from office, is but
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After having amused himself for a while, in that address, on the violence of the rioters, and informed them of the injustice and cruelty of their proceedings; he throws aside fear, shame, honour, and truth at once, and assures the nation, that the populace, concerned in the scandalous outrage of which he speaks, were by no means a rabble, impelled by their own phrenzy; but were the dupes and tools of men, in whom to deceive such a tribe, was worse than infamy. The cause of their conduct might, indeed, have been more accurately defined at the time. They saw their church insulted by rude and scurrilous pasquinades. They were reproached with the “hypocrisy of their Ministers, and the legal oppressions of their Clergy.” (See the hand-bill recited in the King’s Proclamation, on the subject.) They heard that the Dissenters were engaged in publications, which menaced alike the civil and religious Establishment of the State. And they were irritated by Revolution Clubs, and French Anniversaries, which they regarded but as assemblies of men, solely occupied in maturing evil designs. But to all this Doctor Priestley pays little regard. “You have been led, says he, (in his Letter to his late townsmen and neighbours,) to consider an injury done to us as a meritorious thing. By the discourses of your teachers, and others, drinking damnation and confusion to us (which is well known to have been their frequent practice), your bigotry has been excited to the highest pitch, and nothing having been said to you to moderate your passions, and every thing to enflame them. Hence you were prepared for every species of outrage.” — In this manner he speaks to the insurgents,

to defend the laws from the innovations of temerity, and to secure those who would obey the State,

in order to transfer the odium of their guilt from them to their Clergy. But is this honest, honourable, decent, or manly? Is it not an attack upon a body of men, which, unsubstantiated as it is, and ever will be, deserves the contempt and detestation of every person of sensibility and truth?

Doctor Priestley, however, has been no less zealous to diffuse, than earnest to advance the opinions contained in the preceding extract. He has even propagated them, it would be thought, in a neighbouring kingdom: and his friend, Monsieur Condorcet, seems to have caught his spirit, and to have imitated his language, in the letter addressed to him, by the direction of the Academy of Sciences at Paris. "You are not," says that writer, "the only person against whom tyrants have armed the very people whom they have deprived of their rights; these are the only means which they can make use of against him whose elevation of soul shelters him from their seduction and vengeance. — They calumniate such a person, when they can neither intimidate nor corrupt him; they arm prejudice against him, when they dare not arm the laws; and that which they have done is the noblest homage, which tyranny dares to render to probity and to courage, &c. &c." — This language demands no commentary. It does not, indeed, directly attribute the barbarity of a mob to the machinations of Government, or of the Clergy; but it speaks of tyrants and oppressors in very plain terms. In philosophy, the profound Monsieur Condorcet has adopted his own sentiments and his own liberality.

But

State, from the machinations of those who would rule it. The good of Society, it has been well said, may require that no person should be deprived of the protection of government, on account of his religious opinions. But it does not follow that men ought to be trusted, in any degree, in the preservation of the Establishment who must, to be consistent with themselves, endeavour the subversion of that which is established. An indulgence to consciences, which the principles of education and long habit have rendered scrupu-

But even this success in his labours has by no means satisfied the Doctor. No opportunity does he omit of charging the riots of Birmingham on the established Clergy: and his flimsy answer to the flimsy address of the students of the New College at Hackney, but little authorizes the conclusion, that time has tempered the acrimony of his spirit. "You see," says he, "in the riots of Birmingham, how naturally a failure of argument leads to violence. A hierarchy, equally the bane of Christianity and of rational liberty, now confesses its weakness; and be assured you will either see its complete reformation, or its fall."

When a man can write in this manner; when he can dare to accuse of a public breach of the laws, the public teachers of the Gospel; when he can presume to impute the worst actions, to an whole profession of men, without the shadow of proof: when he gives the full authority of his name, to aspersions the most vile, and slanders the most unfounded, it cannot be a breach of charity to assert that he has violated every principle of equity and of truth, and merited the character, not merely of an implacable foe, but of a clumsy defamer.

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lous, may be agreeable to the rules of good policy and humanity. Yet will it hardly be inferred from thence, that a government is under any obligation to indulge a tenderness of conscience to come ; or connive at the propagating of those prejudices, and at the forming of those habits. The evil effect is without remedy, and may, therefore, merit indulgence ; but the evil cause is to be prevented and can, therefore, be entitled to none*.

And, after all, of what have the Dissenters to complain ? Of little, certainly, save what folly has denominated, and fancy supposed to be, a grievance : and if, as Mr. Burke explicitly maintains†, their civil privileges remain entire ; if the laws have fully permitted to them, in qualification for office, an occasional conformity ; if the Test Act itself is grown, in their consideration, to be hardly any thing more than a dead letter ; and if, when they cease by their conduct to give any alarm to the government, in Church and State, it is very probable that even this matter, rather

* See Bolingbroke's Letter to Sir William Wyndham.

† Letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, Bart. p. 29. In this letter, from ignorance of the present state of Ireland, I must presume, Mr. Burke has in some places mistated the most plain and obvious facts, relative to the sufferings of the Roman Catholics, in consequence of being denied the rights of suffrage. The whole pamphlet, indeed, appears to have been written, as the author candidly acknowledges, " in a state of the most imperfect information." p. 3.

disgustful than inconvenient to them, will be removed--then may it be safely asserted that their political afflictions are light indeed, and that with themselves is the remedy of every evil which they suffer from the restrictions of the laws. Their panacea will be found in their reformation.

I might here have closed this Review, but that one topic remained to be discussed, sufficiently important to merit attention. I, therefore, request your Lordship's patience a little longer.

The reformers of the hour do not, then, confine their enmity to the Church.

—— Spargere voces

In vulgum ambiguas

is a maxim which they have adopted on many other points. Monarchy, in particular, has provoked their censure, and they do not understand why the multitude should be governed by one man, or, indeed, why they should be governed at all*. They regard kings but as so many "royal figures."

* In the characters here alluded to, I observe an extraordinary degree of virulence, when they speak of monarchs or monarchy. But their virulence has not restrained itself to the common perversion of truth. Even sex and beauty, and misfortune have been insulted by them, with the same cruel and shameless indifference. How have they spoken of the Queen of France, as they affect to call her without periphrasis, Maria Antonietta? By what epistles of abuse have they not laboured to degrade her? And what comparison have they spared which

figures*." They speak of the term "subject," as the invention of a slavish age, which should be erased from the nomenclature of modern patriotism†. They would exalt the many into rulers, and, of course, would sink the few into slaves. They would constitute innumerable masters, and thus erect a polygarchy, which would render thousands tyrants, and all miserable.

I observe, however, that all government must be somewhere crowned; crowned either in the person of a king, or in a collective body‡. Which, then, of these forms will be most advantageous to mankind?

It must be here obvious, that to each form are attached appropriate excellencies and defects. But that the first will be less feeble and distracted in its agency than the last, appears to be certain. Lodge supreme power with individual unity, and it will be exerted with vigour, with facility, and with dispatch: give it to a collective body, and it

which promised to fully her character!—Guilt itself, when miserable, becomes an object of compassion. But these men think it no disgrace to insult and vilify a Queen, whose errors have been abundantly atoned for by her sufferings, and from whom, even if she had been criminal, pity should have averted the arrow of malevolence.

* *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, p. 89.

† "Submission is wholly a vassalage term, repugnant to the dignity of freedom, and an echo of the language used at the conquest." *Rights of Man*, p. 37.

‡ See Abbe Sciye's Letter to Mr. Payne.

will

will be necessarily exercised with imbecility and opposition, unsteadiness and delay. Vest it in a King, and there will be no diversity of passion, nor discordancy of opinion to distract and retard its operations: consign it to a multitude, and you subject it to the various impediments arising from that tediousness of debate and contradiction of wishes, that disunion of tempers and hostility of interests, to which the deliberations of a multitude are perpetually subject, and which alike obstruct the formation of design and the accomplishment of purpose.

Nor is this all. Where the sovereign authority is put into the hands of a monarch, there can be little danger that foreign potentates will be able to suspend its influence by the artifices of intrigue or the potency of gold. A King will scarcely accept a bribe, which he is to repay by the sacrifice of his own interest; and his Ministers, though they may have "itching palms", will, from their responsibility and their immediate subjection to the will of their master, be, if not superior to corruption, at least unable effectually to accomplish the designs of the corrupter. But in an assembly of governors, how many may be found to barter domestic welfare for foreign wealth! In such an assembly, as was frequently the case in Greece and Rome*, factions may easily be fo-

mented

* The influence which the Kings of Persia maintained over the tribe of Orators in Greece, and, through them, over the public Counsels, is known by every

mented by the interest, and retained under the direction of external powers. The members of it will be subject to no immediate controul. They will be more venal, because their punishment will be less certain. And they will have little to deter them from the infamous traffic of treason for treasure, because the discovery and condemnation of their guilt will be equally difficult. Thus, in the very heart of a country governed by the many, may mischiefs be fomented of the most fatal nature; and the foe who possesses only the art by which he of Macedon opened the gates of so many cities, may remove all obstruction from his course, without bloodshed or contest.

Besides, Kings or their Ministers may be made answerable for every particular of their conduct by the laws. When Kings err, every one knows to

sinatterer of ancient history : and, in Rome, from the æra of the fall of Carthage, there were never wanting senators ready to sell the interests of their country to foreign Kings, who had gold enough to satisfy their avarice. The astonishing affluence, indeed, of many of the Roman nobles, was derived from four sources ; pillage after victory, rapine in the provinces, usurious contracts with needy Kings, and the presents or bribes artfully conferred by princes, whose ambition had any favour to claim from the resistless power of the Senate. Cicero, if I remember right, had sixteen palaces in different parts of Italy. For some of them he was indebted to the prudent foresight of monarchs, who knew the wonders which were to be performed by his enwitching eloquence.

whom

whom the error is to be attributed ; and detection treads " upon the kibes " of guilt. But of a multitude of rulers it must be impossible to segregate the criminal from the innocent ; and none can be responsible, because all will be concerned. What law can reach an whole senate ? What punishment can be extended to an whole faction of Governors ? What controul can affect a combination of legislators, whose guilt, involving all, is not exclusively imputable to any ?—None.—The association of many magistrates becomes their individual impunity ; and their individual impunity supports and aggravates their common despotism.

But Kings may be tyrants. Certainly. A collective body may become tyrannical also, and the tyranny of an individual is lenity and mercy, compared with that of a multitude : of an individual, who has but one will, and one ambition to gratify ; of a multitude, whose ambition and whose will are not less various than the designs and sentiments of the units who compose it.

Are monarchs traitors to the people ? they may be more easily checked and overthrown than a traiterous polygarchy. Against a despotic individual all may combine ; against many despots a part only can conspire : and, as the strength of the first depends on the resources but of one, the strength of the last exists in the resources of multitudes. I observe, likewise, that of a confederacy of tyrants, the designs extend more widely, and the power operates more fatally and more diffusively, than can the force or wickedness of single majesty. Those who might escape ruin, if they

were to risk proscription by one man only, will find destruction inevitable, where the proscribers are numerous. Cicero would not have bled in his litter, if Antony had not been the associate of Octavius : and Paulus would have survived the ruin of his country, if Octavius had not super-added his revenge to that of Lepidus. It may be, therefore, laid down as a political axiom, that tyranny, wherever it exists, will, in its might and cruelty, bear an exact proportion to the number of the tyrants.

The lovers of republics will probably remark, that this reasoning is contradicted by the evidence of history. For when were practised barbarities so cruel and so oppressive, as under the Roman Emperors ! What despotism ever surpassed that of Domitian ? What tyranny ever equalled that of Caligula ? What malignity was ever so black and mischievous as that of Nero ?

It is granted :—those monsters were cruel beyond the expression of language. But their cruelty does not authorize us to reject monarchic forms, for multitudinous government. The motives which impelled them to such deeds of infamy, were of a nature not likely again to prevail in any succession of Kings. Their power was fluctuating and precarious. They held the reins of empire but by the frail consent of the Prætorian guards. It was long before popular attachment to the old government ceased to raise up enemies to their authority : and, from the wide spread of their dominions, they were necessitated to consign to their lieutenants such a portion of authority, as rendered
their

their vassals, at times, the objects of apprehension. Hence their jealousy was often alarmed, and their suspicion quickened. They learned the sanguinary lessons of fear: they were taught, by the dangers of their situation, to look for safety from murder, and as their inhumanity frequently provoked insurrection, insurrection tended only to exasperate their inhumanity.

I seek not to apologize for the guilt of those royal barbarians: to apologize for it by a single word, would be to share it. But I cannot conceive that so many men, in such regular succession, would have been found to disgrace humanity by almost nameless crimes, if the causes I have mentioned had not operated to stimulate their fury, and enflame their revenge. Nature is said to exhaust herself if she produce an Homer or a Newton once in a century; but the appearance of an Homer or Newton is more probable, as it is more congenial with the designs and laws, than that of a Nero or Caligula: and a series of monarchs like those of Rome is less to be expected by the world, than a progeny of illustrious spirits, who might bless and enlighten mankind by the wisdom of a Plato, or the virtues of a Socrates.

If, however, it be still maintained, that monarchy is to be rejected for the crimes of monarchs; republics, I am apprehensive, will not fail of rejection for the crimes of the many. Commonwealths, the most sagacious in contrivance that antiquity ever knew, have been, I do not hesitate to assert, more cruel and more despotic than the worst formed monarchical institution the world ever saw.

saw. The tragedies acted over and over again, even in Greece, by the cruelty of the people, equalled or surpassed the most sanguinary of those exhibited by the Emperors of Rome. That at Athens, as well as in the other democratical states, money alone could obtain the favour of the populace, and the favour of the populace alone was safety; that strangers and citizens alike were necessitated to purchase protection by bribes, and to sacrifice fortune that they might be secure *;—that, as Swift describes London, “discoverers, witnesses, informers, accusers, and swearers, together with their several subservient and subaltern instruments,” constituted a considerable part of the public body †; that the wise and the good, as Socrates and Plato, and their common followers, were no more safe from the rage of the multitude, than the guilty and the base; these things every one knows, who has received the slightest tincture of classic learning, and, therefore, need not to be here particularly detailed. Other circumstances, and incom-

* In any pecuniary distress, the Athenians, it seems, had one mode of relief, which they rarely refused to adopt. A public assembly was called. A wealthy citizen, or stranger, was accused of some fancied crime; and, being banished or put to death, his property was seized on by the state, and applied as the public exigencies required. See Lyfias, Orat. 29. in Nicom.

† Lyfias, Orat. XX. Orat. XIV. de Pop. Statu. The rich, says Charmides, in the banquet of Socrates, are afraid of me, and I am a tyrant in the city. Zenophon, p. 885. Ed. Leunclay.

parably

parably more heinous, excite notice: power, in the Græcian governments, was perpetually displayed in deeds of cruelty. Whatever faction prevailed was sure to let loose murder or banishment upon its foes. Even the execrable despotism of the thirty tyrants, was not more furious and sanguinary than that of the people*. No sooner was the popular wrath excited, than all form of process, law, trial, and investigation ceased. Condemnation usurped the tribunal seat, and, with her ears closed against the vindication of the unhappy, continued to reiterate the sentence of death, or exile, till half a city had fallen a victim to her revenge. Nor was this mischief of rare occurrence. Every revolution of party produced similar devastation. The very word which implies animosity was unknown, until it was introduced by the virtue of Thrasylbulus*. And it is the observation of Thucydides, that, "in the various con-

* The thirty tyrants, in about as many days, put to death one thousand of the people, and forced into exile one half of those that remained; (Diod. Sicul. Lib. XIV.) or according to Seneca, (De Tranq. Anim. Cap. V.) fifteen hundred. Yet Lyfias, a professed friend of democracy, expressly declares, that the government of the commonwealths of Greece was not more mild and merciful, than that of this cruel confederacy of despots; and he declares it too, in a manner expressive neither of his astonishment nor of his disapprobation. Orat. XXIV. et .XXIX.

† Cicero, Philip. I.

" tests

“ tests which arose from republican faction, the
 “ stupid and inconsiderate always prevailed over
 “ the wise and prudent ; because while these re-
 “ flected, those acted, and were uniformly pre-
 “ pared to drench the poignard in blood, that they
 “ might destroy such by violence as superior pe-
 “ netration would otherwise have enabled to ac-
 “ quire ascendancy *.” Mark the consequences of
 this disposition. At one period twelve hundred
 nobles were murdered at Argos, from the instiga-
 tion of Demagogues, who were murdered, in their
 turn, because their cruelty fell short of the ex-
 pectations of the populace † : at another the Phlia-
 cians destroyed six hundred of their principal ci-
 tizens, and drove many more into exile ‡ : at an-
 other one hundred and twenty of a defeated party
 fell in the streets of Corinth, and five hundred
 were banished || : and, at another, not to mention
 the number that this spirit of massacre butchered
 at home, the Grecians, whom the savage temper
 of their fellow-citizens scattered abroad, amounted
 to no fewer than twenty thousand§. Such was
 the boasted moderation of the Greek republics !

* Thucid. Lib. III.

† Diodor. Sicul. Lib. XIV.

‡ Idem, Sic. Lib. XV.

|| Idem. Lib. XIV.

§ Idem, Lib. XVIII. From a knowledge of the
 fury with which banishment was inflicted by the people,
 Isocrates assures Philip of Macedon, that he might more
 easily raise an army among the “ vagabonds,” than in
 the cities of Greece.

Such the manly simplicity of ancient commonwealths * !

It

* *Vindicia Gall.* p. 32. The second Part of Mr. Paine's political reveries has just reached me, and it displays, I think, an ignorance of the nature and operation of the old Republics, which is peculiarly noticeable. According to the author, the democracies of former days were wise, noble, and generous establishments; "most easily to be understood, and most eligible in practice." Chap. 3. But how does he represent kingly government? As a fallacy and a fraud. As an institution of ruinous expence, and despotic agency; an institution which it is full time every where to oppose and destroy, and which tends only to depress and beggar the people. *Ibid.* The observations, however, which I have made above, and the facts which I have adduced to confirm those observations, may possibly shew, that such representations are frivolous and false: may shew that republican forms are by no means so admirable and efficacious as they are said to be—that the tyranny of the many is more to be dreaded than the tyranny of one—that the executive powers of a nation will be more active and potent in agency, when vested in a single King, than when vested in a multitude of Kings—that the worst monarchy ever known, has not been more cruel and afflictive, than the most admired commonwealths—that the general liberty has much less to dread from the operations of royal authority, or the ambition of sovereigns, than from the despotic spirit which has been perpetually known to infuse malignity into the measures of popular establishments—and that, consequently, the antimonarchical speculations of Mr. Paine, in his new work, are little more than the ebullitions of a rash unlettered zealot, who

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praises

It appears, then, by no means so certain, that monarchy is less favourable to the rights of man, than polygarchical establishments. But, should monarchy be hereditary, or elective? Should the authority of nations be transferred, like a common estate, according to the law of primogeniture? or should the people be permitted to consign it, on every vacancy of the throne, as their inclinations might direct?—These questions the Whigs of the clubs have likewise proposed, and likewise answered. They despise monarchy in the abstract*; but hereditary monarchy they detest†. They see

praises and condemns at hazard, and who is equally unacquainted with the democracies of Greece, which he affects to admire, and the regal systems which he labours to condemn.

* Courtiers well know, that if monarchy were seen by others as it is seen by them, the juggle could not long be kept up. *Rights of Man*, p. 39. What are these men (Kings) kept for? *Idem*, p. 59. Monarchical sovereignty, the enemy of mankind, the source of misery, &c. *Idem*, p. 69.

† The King of England is almost the only lawful King in the world, because the only one who owes his crown to the choice of his people. *Price's Sermon*, p. 30. Hereditary succession is a thing in imagination, the propriety of which is more than doubted, and the legality of which will be in a few years denied—Hereditary succession cannot be established a legal thing.—The more ignorant any country is, the better it is fitted for hereditary government.—A government by monks is as consistent as government by kings. *Rights of Man*, p. 57, 58, 59, 67, 69, &c.

no reason why royalty should descend in the direct line of succession, from King to King: and they think it folly and madness to vest the rights of sovereignty in any but those immediately appointed by the will of the people.

Of this doctrine, the least that can be said is, that it directly thwarts the decided opinion of the major part of mankind, and can have no effect but what shall be injurious to the peace and comfort of the world. Where would it not extend confusion, and excite insurrection? How many kingdoms would it not involve in civil war? What monarchy at present exists, against which it would not provoke rebellion? And how few advantages after all would it produce, to atone for the anarchy and ruin which would spring from it? But without dwelling on the immediate havock it would occasion; the spoliation of kings, the subversion of governments, the unchained licentiousness of the people, and the utter contempt of established policy and law; there are other reasons which oblige me to regard it as a most pernicious and untenable principle: untenable and pernicious, though there were no hereditary monarch to dispute its validity; though the public were left wholly free to try its efficacy in practice, and though it were adopted by the unbiassed and unanimous suffrage of all.

Where it has been already adopted, has it proved salutary or injurious?—Let declining Rome*,
let

* I know that, in some instances, the Roman monarchy cannot be strictly said to have been elective; but, in the

let distracted Poland reply. In each of those nations, monarchy was elective; in each it became ruinous. How many revolutions, what perpetual bloodshed, what impotency of administration, what convulsive paroxysms were experienced and bewailed by both? Has not the one fallen, and would not the other have sunk into the same nihility, if it had continued any longer the sport of a voting public?—No bribery, cabals, intrigues, corruptions, and enormities did they escape, which could vitiate, vilify, and harass mankind: discord preyed upon their vitals: their people were inexpressibly miserable: and they became monuments to the world of the misfortunes and calamities which perpetually issue from elective crowns.

Nor could this be otherwise. “The filling of
 “a throne,” says Hume, “is a point of too
 “great and too general interest, not to divide the
 “whole people into factions; whence a civil
 “war, the greatest of ills, may be apprehended
 “with certainty upon every vacancy. The prince
 “elected must be either a foreigner or a native.
 “The former will be ignorant of the people whom
 “he is to govern; suspicious of his new subjects,
 “and suspected by them; giving his confidence
 “entirely to strangers, who will have no other
 “care but of enriching themselves in the quickest
 “manner, while their master’s favour or authority

far greater number of cases, the crown was the donation of choice, and of the choice of a brutal and corrupt multitude.

“can

“ can support them. A native will carry into
 “ the throne all his private animosities and friend-
 “ ships, and will never be viewed in his elevation,
 “ without exciting the sentiment of envy, in those
 “ who formerly considered him as their equal. Not
 “ to mention that a crown is too high a reward,
 “ ever to be given to merit alone, and will always
 “ induce the candidates to employ force, or money,
 “ or intrigue, to procure the votes of the electors:
 “ so that such an election will give no better
 “ chance, for superior merit in the prince, than
 “ if the state had trusted to birth alone, for de-
 “ termining their sovereign *.”

For these reasons, my Lord, we rejoice that we live under a monarchy—and that we live under a monarchy, held solely and absolutely by the tenour of hereditary right, we rejoice yet more. But though monarchy in general, and hereditary monarchy in particular, were as noxious as Mr. Paine and his fraternity have asserted they are; and though there were no force in the preceding observations, yet would the English monarchy, if a monarchy it may be termed, remain unaffected by all that democratical logicians have been able to alledge against individual royalty. For, our government, your Lordship well knows, is a government of three distinct powers, mutually restraining and restrained, and of which it is the interest of all to controul the ambition of each. In this combination of strength, this poise of mighty weights, the King represents the undivided

* Essay III,

unity which should ever prevail in executive administration, and can neither make laws for himself, nor do any thing which the laws forbid. He must harmonize, in his conduct, with the Lords and Commons, or cease politically to exist. He must obey the decrees of the Legislature, or abdicate the throne. He must govern like William, or fall like James.

Such a monarchy, a monarchy so reformed and so balanced, can have nothing dangerous in its texture. In promoting order, it prevents licentiousness; and, in preventing licentiousness, it becomes a stable security to the freedom of the people. It is not, indeed, an abject dependant upon the will and caprice of the Commons or of the Lords; or upon the will and caprice of the multitude. If it can be checked, it can check; if its movements can be confined within a certain orbit, it can reciprocally affect the movements of the other bodies of the legislature; it is neither the petty attendant satellite, nor the excentric comet arrayed in the blaze of despotism. It is one of three planets, which, equal in gravity, are of equal force; and which, influenced by the constitution as their sun, owe to that, and that only, regularity of circulation, and perpetuity of splendour.

We are told, it is true, by our political novelists, that the King possesses a steady and preponderating influence in the state. Preponderating in what? Can he make himself absolute? Can he oppose or subvert the laws? Can he consult his will, in any particular, as the exclusive rule of his public

lie conduct? Can he exercise his most indisputable prerogatives, without making them subject, in his servants, to the future scrutiny of the Commons? Can he add one particle to his authority, in opposition to the voice of the constitution, or to that of his colleagues in the legislature? He cannot. Let the critics of royal errors dogmatise as they please, he cannot. His authority is great: it is the connecting principle which keeps together the whole structure of government; "the key-stone which binds the vast and nobly constructed arch of our establishment and our empire." But, so far is it from being absolute in controul, or resistless in power, that its limitations on every side are accurately defined; and its operations must terminate, on the instant they cease to be legitimate and constitutional.

Though I maintain, however, that the Sovereign is thus limited, I deny that he is, in any sense, "the servant of the People*." Sovereignty and servitude cannot possibly exist in the same person; they are terms which have no more affinity

* The King is to consider himself as more properly the servant than the sovereign of the people. Doctor Price's Sermon, 22, 23, 24. A King is no more than the first servant of the people. Idem, *ibid.* Is not the chief magistrate in every country, let him be called Sovereign or King, the servant of the people? Doctor Priestley's Letters, p. 23. The people are the judges whether they are well served by the King. Idem, p. 23. The magistrate I respect but as the confidential servant of the people. Idem, . 2.

than

than darkness and light. Can he, whom the people are commanded to obey, be the servant of the people? Can he, who is empowered to execute the laws which decree the punishment of their individual guilt, be the servant of the people? Can he, who may annul their will, though uttered by their Representatives in the most solemn and emphatic manner, be the servant of the people? This transfer of majesty, then, this imputation of servitude, this abasement of station, and deterioration of dignity, which so many of late have thought it glory to assert, I should deem it weakness and folly not to reject with contempt. The King, so says the political creed of genuine Whigism, is our Liege Lord, and Sovereign paramount. If he be the pupil of the Constitution, he is the Ruler of the Nation. He knows no subserviency but to the laws*.

Comprehend,

* It is singular enough that, while the democratical writers of these times toil to degrade the character, and to subvert the power of Kings, they should be assiduous to raise every subject to a kind of political sovereignty. They invest each man, even in society, with all his natural rights; and they endeavour to prove that, under the very convention of civil institution, he should have none to obey but himself, and should remain as free as if he were left to roam a savage in the woods — N'obeisse qu'à lui-même, & reste aussi libre qu' auparavant. Rousseau du Cont. Soc. lib. i. c. 4. — But, when they venture on such positions; when they tell us that, “far from a surrender, there is not even a *diminution* of the natural Rights of Man by their (his) entrance into society,” — Mackintosh,

Comprehend, now, my Lord, the whole view at once---the superiority of monarchical over republican establishments---the dangers and evils which beset elective crowns---the utility and wisdom of hereditary royalty---the regulations and controuls which are provided to check the ambition of our Kings, without narrowing the action of their rightful power---their seignorial authority, as supreme magistrates, over the people; and their wholesome subjection to the institutes of the Legislature---and, perhaps, you will agree with me, (and, if you agree, what shall I have to fear from contradiction?) that the democratical dogma of

toth, Vin. Gall. sect. 14.—They seem to forget that it is the very object of all the laws of civil union, to regulate the conduct, and coerce the passions of individuals; or, in other words, to deprive each of so much of his natural rights as is necessary to the welfare of all. Every law, at least every restrictive ordinance, tends to diminish those rights; and can society subsist without laws, or without restrictive ordinances?—To be avengers of our own wrongs, and judges in our own cause are natural rights; but must we not surrender, absolutely and decidedly surrender, all such rights whenever we enter into a political compact? In fact the freedom of a state of nature, and of a social state, are most different things; and the very restrictions which subtract from that of the first, tend most to support and secure that of the last. But this is denied, now! “Justice is expediency”—nevertheless, “no expediency” (that is no justice) “can justify the infraction of the natural rights of Man.” Vin. Gall. p. 100, 101. Thus does sophistry terminate in contradiction and absurdity.

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Mrs

Mr. Paine, are contrary alike to reason and experience—that, though they were of weight as referring to monarchy in general, they become utterly absurd when applied to the monarchy of England—that this monarchy is not, as has been said, “a metaphor to be shewn at the Tower for a sixpence or shilling a-piece*”—But that it is a sagacious and salutary contrivance for the due exertion of the public strength—that it is formed to confirm freedom by confining it within lawful bounds—and that, instead of affording reason for the clamours of turbulence, or the insinuations of faction, it should be the object of attachment and of confidence to every man, who values the quiet, protection, and liberty of nations.

Nevertheless, the darts of audacious slander have been, and continue to be levelled at a throne thus constituted†. Our hereditary monarchy, we have long had reason to conclude,

“ thrives, like the oak,

Even by the rude concussions of the storm,

And feels with scorn the impression of the blast.”

But modern levellers have not thought so. They regard it, if their frequent insults have any ex-

* Rights of Man.

† We are even told that, in submitting to our monarchical form of government, we submit to be slaves. “Mankind will scarcely believe that a country calling itself free, would send to Holland for a man, and give him almost a million a-year for leave to submit themselves and their posterity like bond-men and bond-women for ever.” Rights of Man, p. 39.

pression,

pression, as "the reed which trembles with every wind." Even the day which saw it overthrown for a time, and witnessed the martyrdom of a monarch, was, they assure us, "a proud day for England *." The elevation of shameless demagogues into unfeeling tyrants; the scandalous mockery of a pretended and odious trial; the scaffold which was to be moistened with royal blood; the axe consigned by despotism to the hands of the executioner; the scoffs, and taunts, and treasons, of an infatuated and brutalized crowd; the sufferings of Majesty, patient, and brave, and heroic, even when conducted to the block; the pious virulence of Hugh Peters, profaning the song of Simeon, in the phrenzy of fanaticism—these were circumstances, and prospects, and sorrows, which, instead of marking the thirtieth of January with infamy, made it a festal day, a day of pride, and glory, and renown, in the estimation of these detesters of Kings, of this phalanx of declaimers; who can calmly publish satires on their own hearts, and tell to the world, in defiance of its scorn, tell without a blush, that they rejoice in what is shame, and triumph in what is calamity! All this, however, is admirably consistent with the loyal sentiments with which they look up to Kings†.

For

* Doctor Priestley's Letters to Mr. Burke, p. 40,

† "I have lived," says one of these writers, with exultation, "to see a King led in triumph" "A King dragged in submissive triumph," says another, "is one of those appearances of grandeur which I shall always

For what, they exclaim, is respect for crowns but a degree of superstition, first recommended by an age of extreme barbarism, and now banished by civilization * !” Where has equal liberty been found but in America, under a government, “ without nobles, without bishops, and without a king † !” And what is a monarch but “ a servant, to be cashiered by the multitude at will ‡ ; a thing, a name, or a fraud ; a contrivance of human craft to obtain money from a nation under specious pretences ; a something which appears to be much going out of fashion, falling into ridicule, and rejected in some countries both as unnecessary and expensive § !”

My Lord, there is energy in all this. It speaks an open and explicit language ; a spirit which feasts in fancy on the murder of Kings. And yet generalities such as these, bold and treasonable though they be, have not satisfied the brave ardour of our brethren of the conventicle. Personal insult and outrage have been conducted to the throne. Even he himself, who “ bears his honors so mildly,” and in whom the generous philanthropist who loves his people, reflects honor on the upright sovereign who rules them, has not been secure from the reproaches of the political inquisitors who have been so often before us : and his

think of with wonder and gratification.” See Price’s Sermon, and Mr. Burke’s Observ. p. 90.

* Doctor Priestley’s Letters to Mr. Burke.

† Idem, *ibid.*

‡ See Price’s Sermon.

§ Paine, p. 58.

person

person, his disposition, his understanding, his family, and his country, have been all equally scandalized by these preachers of liberty, and practisers of licentiousness *---And why? For the greatest crime which, in their opinion, humanity can commit. He has dared to be a King.

To comment on sentiments of this complexion would be vanity. My countrymen will easily determine of the temper and principles from which they flow. The fountain will be at once ascertained by the stream; but if, when thus brought together, they appear hostile to monarchs and monarchy; if they seem to be calculated only to promote confusion where there ought to be peace; and hostility where there should be concord; if to carry them into effect, would be obviously to overthrow our Constitution and Laws, and to establish a tumultuary system under which the populace

+ "This species of government (a government with insolence and contempt) comes from Germany." Paine, p. 56. "If England is sunk to this, it is preparing to eat straw, as in Hanover and Brunswick." Idem, p. 57. "Was wisdom at such a low ebb, that it was become necessary to import it from Holland or Hanover!—But, I will do the country the justice to say, that was not the case; and if it was, it mistook the cargo." Idem, p. 59, 60. "If, in the monarchs we owe to Hanover or to Holland, we expected to import either wisdom or virtue, we mistook the cargo; and God help that country, be it England or elsewhere, which is to be governed by the petty princes of the House of Brunswick." Idem.

would

would become the agents of demagogues, and demagogues would be despots ; if, I say, they be of this nature, who shall abet them but the criminal and the weak ? or who shall regard their authors as worthy of popular favour, but agitators like themselves ; the rash, the restless, and the riotous ; those whose temper, if the cup of felicity were raised to their lips, would infuse bitterness into the draught ; and who, were their power only proportioned to their will, would accomplish revolutions for a straw actuated by the current, or a feather fluttering in the gale ?

Yes ; whatever these men suppose, their disapprobation is praise, their contempt is honor. When they speak of George the First and Second, history will answer them : but when they decry our present sovereign, his virtues will be their confutation and reproach ; and the malevolence which would defame and overshadow his worth, will only contribute to render his character more amiable in the estimation of his people.

Of his private life, we all know and acknowledge the desert. His domestic character, little imitated, and not to be surpassed, is the best satire on the prevailing vices of the times. He has left it to other hands to transplant foreign iniquities into British soil ; and when he flings aside the incumbrances of royalty, and gives the father to his family, we behold excellence adorning and ennobling station, and are taught to love whom we are commanded to obey.

But he has not been studious only to render prudence and reason fashionable. He has beheld
the

the increasing splendor of the arts and sciences with no indifferent eye. He has erected an Academy in his capital, in which the English pencil has acquired Italian perfection. He has relieved the wants of a Johnson, and rewarded the Christian labours of a Porteus; and "the five great voyages successively undertaken by his command, and inspired by the pure love of virtue and of mankind," have not only contributed to the comfort and civilization of distant nations, but have opened new prospects on the mind of man, and afforded additional scope to the excursions of knowledge.

As a magistrate, his conduct is measured by his duty. He seeks more for distinction as the subject of the law, than as the sovereign of the empire. He is the friend and guardian of the constitution, and the conservator of the public peace: and, while with one hand he holds the balance of European empire, with the other he sheds the blessings of justice and liberty upon the nation.

Let faction for once speak truth on this subject, and what will be her language? Will she accuse him, in any instance, of oppression or revenge? Will she attribute to him a single deviation from equity and law? Will she deny that he is, in the genuine sense of the words, the friend and father of his people? No, no. "I hate him," she will say, "not because he is the foe of freedom, but "because he is mine; because he leaves me no "reason for reproach and violence; because his "conduct falsifies my assertion, and impedes my "progress; and because, touched by the beam of
" his

“his virtues, the wings on which I would rise
 “melt away, and I fall, like Icarus, and become
 “a nothing.”

The ability and worth of individuals never fail, when wisely employed, to become public blessings. They are as mines, from whence monarchs may draw the most precious treasure. The King, therefore, has been assiduous to call forth talent and virtue into action. By the appointments he has made in his courts of Judicature, he has, especially, contributed to the illumination of the legal world : and it is owing to his care that, the laws were never more impartially administered, they were never better understood than they have lately been ; they were never expounded and explained with greater accuracy and erudition ; they were never ascertained by discussions of more important topics of constitutional wisdom ; and they were never confirmed by more interesting determinations of disputed points, and by decisions more favorable to private property and public right.

But, in this truly excellent character there is yet another feature, which, at such an æra as the present, is peculiarly deserving of notice and applause.

It has of late been common to indulge, on the most sacred topics, a boldness of opinion, and a latitude of thought, equally censurable and extreme. The scoffer no longer confines his credulous incredulity to himself. Even one of our most celebrated writers, who has impoverished fancy to enrich history, and embellish the most barren subjects with Ciceronian decorations, has artfully levelled

levelled his arrows at Christianity, vainly hoping to reach her heart, whose heart is invulnerable by mortal hands. To undermine the fabric of the Gospel—but what shall undermine the fabric erected and upheld by Omnipotence?—he has employed all the powers of learned artifice and sarcastic vivacity; nor have his labours ceased to wean those from hope who are happy in hope, and to detach those from faith, whose faith shall lead them to heaven. Of endeavours such as these, the consequences have been many and mischievous. In the fashionable world, to other vices which disgrace humanity, are now, often, added those which are the parents of them all—irreligion and infidelity. Without judgment to reason, or patience to enquire, or candour to examine, or zeal for wisdom, or love of truth, multitudes of the great have renounced the tenets cherished for ages by the wise and good, and have demonstrated, by their rejection of the Gospel, that not in fabulous ages alone have folly and impiety dared to wage war on Heaven.

Happy is it, then, that he whose example is most conspicuous amongst us, is most attached to the Christian cause: happy is it that we recognize in our sovereign not merely domestic virtue, a paternal regard for the welfare of the people, and an eager zeal to maintain and meliorate the laws; but a sincere and steadfast veneration of Evangelical wisdom. The world acknowledge he is great as a king; greater as the king of a brave and prosperous nation; and greater still, as the king of a

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nation

nation not only prosperous and brave, but free. In the eye of reason, however, he appears still more dignified as the humble disciple of the Gospel; and the piety which leads him into retreat, elevates the monarch in the man, ennobles the man in the Christian, and confers, in the moments of self-abasement, a nobility and elevation before which the glory of potentates, and the splendor of thrones, are less than nothing.

Behold, my Lord, a miniature of his virtues; of virtues which have secured the love and veneration of his people. I know, indeed, there are some who think that, in presuming to be a king, he has contracted a stain which no excellence of conduct, and no pre-eminence of desert can possibly efface. But, whatever may be the opinion of the brave venders of democratical politics, the affections of the nations are with him. He has—and what can he have more?—the respect and attachment he merits; and he will continue to enjoy both, when all the patriotic haters of kings will be left, in the language of Homer, “*φθιμευθων*” “*φιλονυχης*,” to devour their own heart in solitude and desertion, and to ruminate with sorrow on the neglect and oblivion, to which, in spite of their toils to acquire a name, the contempt of the world shall finally consign them.

And, now, were the reasonable part of mankind to address these men, in what manner would they speak? On this question I have sometimes speculated, and cannot but think they would deliver their sentiments in some such words as these:

Gentlemen,

Gentlemen Malcontents,

“ From a dispassionate review of your writings,
 “ it appears you have devoted much time, and
 “ whatever ability you possessed, to instruct the
 “ people in doctrines immediately contradictory of
 “ their ancient prejudices, and directly hostile to
 “ their old attachments. You have declared
 “ hostility against experience, and against fact;
 “ and exhausted the magazine of fiction, in your
 “ combats with common sense and established
 “ truth. You have fabricated paradoxes which
 “ maintain that the free are the enslaved; that
 “ Englishmen are without liberty; that their con-
 “ stitution is a nullity and a jest; and that their
 “ laws, in various instances, are formed but to
 “ oppress and subjugate the people*. You have
 “ endeavoured, also, to prove, that even con-
 “ science has to lament amongst us the infringe-
 “ ment of her rights; and you have rested the
 “ proof on the assertion, that toleration and in-
 “ tolerance, instead of being opposite in their
 “ nature, are both despotisms, which a wise and
 “ a brave people would disdain to suffer. But,
 “ gentlemen, without enquiring whether the
 “ children of absurdity be authorised to erect them-
 “ selves into philosophers and statesmen, into
 “ censurers of nations, reformers of government,
 “ subverters of constitutions, commentators of law,

* An Englishman is not free in his own country. Rights of Man, p. 7. That would be to suppose the legislature of France as corrupt as a neighbouring one of pretended freedom. Mackintosh, p. 110. &c. &c.

" and guardians of the rights and liberties of
 " mankind; we would beg to be informed what
 " are to be the fruits of such idle and adventurous
 " speculations? Conviction is the offspring of
 " reason only, but contempt is ever in pursuit of
 " vain and audacious ignorance: nor can we ap-
 " plaud, however you may admire, the wit which
 " is petulance, the argument which is assumption,
 " the logic which is sophistry, and the zeal which
 " is intemperance. If you say we are not free:
 " we beseech you to tell us in what particulars
 " we are slaves*. If you assert we are intolerant:
 " we

* There is one proof of the pre-eminent liberty of
 Great-Britain, which these persons often put to the test,
 but which they have never the gratitude to acknowledge.
 Even in the freest of the modern Republics, and much
 more under the absolute governments of Europe, the
 press is restrained and shackled by the most explicit laws.
 In Venice or Holland, to inveigh against the public ad-
 ministration, to revile the magistracy, and to defame or
 ridicule the institutions of the state, would be regarded
 as a crime worthy of the most exemplary punishment.
 But in England no such polity prevails. There, who
 does not speak and publish what he likes? There, let the
 most treasonable scandal be but slightly marked, and
 what has she to apprehend? Does the executive
 power proclaim war? Writer after writer toils to de-
 monstrate the madness of rejecting peace. Does it con-
 firm peace? A thousand pens are worn away in declaim-
 ing on the pusillanimity of the Minister, and the crying
 necessity of war. Even royalty itself is not safe from
 invective. To the "Liberty of the Press," he often
 owns

“ we exhort you to point out an instance in which
 “ your are persecuted. If you maintain we have
 “ no constitutional code: we solicit you to inform
 “ us in what consists a constitutional code, if not
 “ in wholesome institutes, in laws of experienced
 “ excellence, in a political system which has so
 “ long operated for the happiness of these nations,
 “ and secured liberty alike to the potent and the
 “ feeble, to the affluent and the poor. Be candid,
 “ then. Bring forth the facts in which you found
 “ your doctrines: and instruct us what acts of
 “ tyranny you have to condemn; what attempts
 “ against your rights you have to alledge; what
 “ civil mischiefs you have sustained, sufficient to
 “ authorize you to scatter your literary poisons
 “ through the land, and to confederate into clubs,
 “ where levelling principles are openly avowed
 “ and extolled, and where designs are machinated
 “ of the most treasonable import.

“ But you would have us imitate France, that
 “ object of your eulogy, and idol of your venera-

owns the defamation of his own character, and of the
 character of his domestics, friends, and family. Possessed of a privilege thus boundless, and exercising it in this manner, no man can reasonably deny that we are, in the whole meaning of the term, free; free, even to licentiousness; free, even to a perversion of the blessings of freedom. It is happy, however, that the Press, which is so often our disgrace, becomes, sometimes, our glory. It is the serpent, which, if it frequently yield poison to the hand of the assassin, offers the antidote as readily to the skill of the physician.

“ tion

“tion. In what? In the spirit with which she has
 “prosecuted revolution? In the humanity with
 “which her populace have dewed their lamp-posts
 “with human blood? In the justice with which
 “her patriots have condemned their foes without
 “the form of trial? In the temper with which
 “her enthusiasts compelled an unhappy son-in-
 “law, preparatory to his own sacrifice, to kiss
 “the mangled lips of his murdered father? In-
 “form us, is it in these things we are to imitate
 “France? Or is she to be imitated in the disci-
 “pline of her army? In the disorder of her navy?
 “In her contempt of the sacred rights of property?
 “In the civilization which her people have demon-
 “strated by deeds of outrage and persecution? In
 “the wide dispersion of the flower of her nobility?
 “In her sanguinary edicts*, prescriptions, oaths,
 “demolition, and plunder†? — But take, for a
 “moment, a serious view of the state of that
 “country you so much admire. Behold the con-
 “fusion of her provinces; the decay of her in-

* See the late resolution of the “National Assembly,”
 against all the absentees of the kingdom, who should not
 return on or before the 1st of January, 1792. Had the
 King confirmed them, he would have deserved even
 more calamity than he has experienced. But he is still a
 monarch in mind, though a slave upon the throne.

† It is singular that even the panegyrists of the French
 Revolution, should acknowledge, in plain terms, most
 of the facts here asserted: but it is yet more singular
 that they should exert all their eloquence to palliate or
 excuse them. See Mackintosh. *Vin, Gall. sect. 3.*

“dustry

"dustry, the warfare of her factions; the dis-
 "luteness of her populace; her beggared artizans;
 "and her impoverished exchequer. Is she, now,
 "more happy than England; is she possessed of a
 "better institution; is her strength more potent;
 "her commerce more flourishing; her freedom
 "more secure; her law more wise?—For us, we
 "humbly conceive, these countries would benefit
 "very little by the examples you exhort us to
 "emulate*. In arts and sciences they are great.
 " In

* How much these men admire the conduct of the late
 Revolutionists of France, they have testified on a thou-
 sand occasions. Take two or three instances only.
 " France is taking the lead, and Britain will be left be-
 " hind, if not provoked by the example of France, to
 " correct abuses which are every day growing more pal-
 " pable," &c. See Address of the Revolution Society
 to the Members of the Patriotic Union at Lisle. " What-
 " ever may be the ultimate fate of the French Revolu-
 " tion, the friends of freedom must ever consider it as
 " one of the greatest attempts hitherto made in the cause
 " of man." Vind. Gall. p. 56. " The shock that
 " destroyed the despotism of France, has widely dis-
 " persed the clouds that interrupted reason from the po-
 " litical and moral world; and we cannot suppose that
 " England is the only spot that has not been reached by
 " this flood of light which has burst on the human race."
 Idem, p. 164.—But not so do they speak of our Revo-
 lution in 1688. Though that Revolution ascertained
 and confirmed our rights as a free people, to them it ap-
 pears noble only in the attempt, but insignificant and
 useless in the execution. I observe, however, that, on
 this

“ In manufactures they are unrivalled. In popu-
 “ lation they are pre-eminent. In the courage
 “ and vigour of their people they are mighty.
 “ They have become the asylum of persecuted
 “ freedom : freedom has called forth the industry
 “ of their inhabitants : and the industry of their

this subject, they have fallen into a political schism ; and
 that some of them have thought it prudent to extol at
 one time, what, at another, they all unite to condemn.
 But hear Mr. Mackintosh and Doctor Price.

DOCTOR PRICE.

By a bloodless victory
 (says he, speaking of the Re-
 volution) the fetters which
 despotism had long been
 preparing for us, were bro-
 ken ; the rights of the peo-
 ple were asserted ; a tyrant
 expelled, and a sovereign of
 our own choice appointed
 in his room. Security was
 given to our property, and
 our consciences were eman-
 cipated. The bounds of
 free enquiry were enlarged,
 and that æra of light and
 liberty was introduced a-
 mongst us by which we
 have been made an exam-
 ple to other kingdoms, and
 become the instructors of
 the world. Price's Sermon,
 p. 56.

MR. MACKINTOSH.

The Revolutionists (of
 England) perpetually belied
 their political conduct, by
 their political phraseology.
 Hence their impotent and
 illusive reforms.

Few of them, it is pro-
 bable, had grand and libe-
 ral views.

The leaders of the Re-
 volution were neither law-
 fully elected, nor lawfully
 assembled.

It must be confessed that
 they punished the usurper
 without meliorating the go-
 vernment, and proscribed
 usurpations, without cor-
 recting their source. Vin.
 Gall. sect. 5.

“ inhabitants

" inhabitants can convert their rocks into gold.
 " Of the persecution of power, of the violation of
 " property, they know nothing. In them right
 " is secured by certain and stable ordinances;
 " punishment can never precede the proof of
 " guilt; criminality is imputable to none, but
 " from a legal determination of the fellow citizens
 " of the criminal; the definition of offences rests
 " not, in the slightest degree, in the pleasure of the
 " magistrate; and the result of all is liberty not
 " less great than were the slavery and despotism of
 " ancient Rome*. In the eulogy of the poet,
 " therefore, we shall not, perhaps, discover any
 " unpardonable exaggeration.

" Lo, this the land —

" When property secures the conscious swain,
 " And guards, while plenty gives, the golden grain :
 " Hence with ripe stores her villages abound,
 " Her airy downs with scatter'd sheep resound ;
 " Fresh are her pastures with unceasing rills,
 " And future navies crown her darksome hills.
 " To bear her formidable glory far,
 " Behold her opulence of hoarded war !
 " See from her posts a thousand banners stream,
 " O'er every coast her vengeful light'nings gleam !
 " Meantime, remote from Ruin's armed hand,
 " In peaceful majesty, her cities stand,
 " Whose splendid domes, and busy streets declare,
 " Their firmest fort, a king's parental care †."
 " Thus flourishing and free ; thus affluent from

* Hume's Essay iii.

† Warton on the Marriage of the King.

“ the industry of her people, and happy from the
 “ wisdom of her laws, England will not suffer by
 “ being paralleled with any other nation ; but on
 “ the contrary, will derive, from such a compa-
 “ rison, whatever contrast can afford to heighten
 “ the splendor of her glory, and throw new light
 “ on the excellence of her constitution. It is
 “ yours, then, to acquaint us, what a country so
 “ circumstanced would profit by adopting the
 “ maxims, and copying the novelties of France.
 “ Would such an imitation render it more tranquil
 “ or prosperous ? Would it accelerate its progress
 “ to political perfection ? Or would it not rather
 “ promote, instead of the blessings of liberty,
 “ disunion and disgrace ?

“ We are sensible that, when you speak of
 “ France, you principally refer to the changes
 “ which the late Revolution have accomplished in
 “ that distracted nation. France in its former
 “ state, though populous and wealthy, you utterly
 “ despise. But France, convulsed and lacerated—
 “ France depressed, and abased, and tortured by
 “ her own sons—France, bleeding at every pore,
 “ from the wounds she owes to a bold and merci-
 “ less faction—this is the France which your pic-
 “ turing eloquence has exhibited as prosperous and
 “ happy, and as likely to become the admiration
 “ of the world. For what reason ? For none that
 “ we can perceive, except that she has had to en-
 “ dure the miseries of a miserable derangement of
 “ her ancient system, and has been thus rendered,
 “ as we imagine, the object, not of exulting eulogy,
 “ but sorrowing commiseration.

“ Revolutions

"Revolutions you think glorious things. Not
 "so do we. Of every revolution the vindication
 "can be found but in its cause and consequences.
 "At best, it must be productive of great and ex-
 "tensive wretchedness; and, if opposed, must end
 "in a civil war, not to be terminated, perhaps,
 "save by the sacrifice of one half of the people,
 "to the infuriate licentiousness of the other.
 "See, in your darling nation, what, though om-
 "nipotent and unresisted, Revolution has already
 "effectuated. See its immediate result in a mean
 "and unstable legislature: in an impoverished and
 "debilitated throne: in a church torn and pil-
 "laged by sacrilegious violence: in the blood
 "which stains the thousand hands of popular con-
 "spiracy: and the triumphs of uproar, over law
 "and reason, humanity and justice. With these
 "things before us, we cannot agree with you, in
 "regarding revolutions as objects of rational de-
 "light. We look to them, on the contrary,
 "with horror: we look to them with horror, as
 "citizens who love their country; and as men
 "who are interested in the fate of their fellow-
 "mortals. You, indeed, by a single comparison,
 "can persuade yourselves that, though they be
 "accomplished at the expence of twenty thousand
 "lives, there is nothing even in this loss, from
 "which a manly and enlightened humanity will
 "revolt*. But we are not yet philosophers; nor

* On comparison of even this loss (of 20,000 lives)
 with parallel events in history, there is nothing in it
 from which a manly and enlightened humanity will re-
 volt." Mackintosh, p. 79.

“ can we pretend to such manly and enlightened
 “ humanity.” “ We are merely men ; and,
 “ therefore, regard whatever may aggravate human
 “ misery, with apprehension and abhorrence.

“ That you wish us to adopt the principles,
 “ and imitate the innovation of our neighbours on
 “ the continent, is evident enough. Why, other-
 “ wise, such a waste of admiration and praise ?
 “ To what end are you so zealous to exhibit to
 “ English eyes the new-born constitution of France
 “ as the only establishment worthy of your ap-
 “ probation and applause ? Or why describe it in
 “ such glowing terms, as the noblest work of
 “ civil wisdom, and the most defecated system
 “ which knowledge and patriotism have ever been
 “ able to raise ? We take it for granted, therefore,
 “ that you would be happy to promote the intro-
 “ duction of this constitution into England ; but
 “ we do not so readily see what inference can be
 “ drawn from this opinion, favourable either to
 “ your understanding or your heart. The present
 “ government and polity of Great-Britain and
 “ France, have no common resemblance : they
 “ are, on the contrary, essentially different in con-
 “ trivance, principle, and agency : they are poli-
 “ tical contradictions which no art could possibly
 “ reconcile : and they who urge us to embrace the
 “ last, urge us, consequently, to reject the first ;
 “ urge us for a doubtful, precarious, misshaped, un-
 “ finished thing, to undertake a revolution greater
 “ than any the world has ever beheld ; a revolution
 “ which would, at one sweep, effectually subvert
 “ our laws ; destroy whatever we have learned
 “ from our habits and principles to respect ; and
 “ utterly

“ utterly deface the form and features of British
 “ liberty.”

“ Not to dwell longer, however, on these to-
 “ pics, permit us further to observe, that the same
 “ spirit of disquiet which prevails in your senti-
 “ ments on Parisian politics, appears also to have
 “ dictated your other doctrines. With every part
 “ of our civil and religious establishment you
 “ live in perpetual war. You appeal to the will
 “ of the people as the sole standard of allegiance
 “ to the laws. You deny the right of the past to
 “ legislate for the present ; and maintain, by con-
 “ sequence, the right of the present to reject the
 “ institutes of the past. But, while you thus
 “ utter tenets which, we think, none but the
 “ most mild and merciful Government would to-
 “ lerate, and none but the most furious dema-
 “ gogues would sustain ; do you advert to the ef-
 “ fects which such tenets may produce ? The
 “ multitude, says Dryden, ‘ are ever ready to do
 “ the business of their leaders with their own
 “ ruin ;’ and the fickleness of their temper, is
 “ noted to a proverb—

“ They call him noble that was now their hate,

“ Him vile that was their garland.” —

“ To instruct a body of this complexion, a body,
 “ moreover, who are utterly unable to compre-
 “ hend thoroughly any one complex question of
 “ right or wrong, and by whom, when truth and
 “ reason shall be despised, the clamours of rea-
 “ son, and the solicitations of passion will be
 “ heard, and be obeyed—to instruct such a body
 “ that the measure of their civil duty exists only
 “ in

“ in their inclination and strength, and that all
 “ the institutes of their fathers, they may, when-
 “ ever they please, abolish without a crime, is an
 “ act, surely, by which no party should hope to
 “ acquire honour, or to deserve praise. Were
 “ these sagacious principles generally embraced,
 “ what would be the consequence? Would the
 “ national tranquillity be confirmed, or the na-
 “ tional prosperity promoted, or the national
 “ freedom enlarged? On the contrary, the peo-
 “ ple would be rendered factious and turbulent,
 “ that is, miserable. They would no longer re-
 “ spect the magistrate, or the magistracy. They
 “ would obey their rulers, if they obeyed at all,
 “ with reluctance and discontent; and they would
 “ stimulated to riot and insurrection, the mis-
 “ chievous effects of which would be first felt by
 “ themselves. What, indeed, would remain to
 “ coerce their passions, or to check their licen-
 “ tiousness? Not, certainly, conscience and the
 “ laws. For they can have nothing to do with
 “ conscience, who are taught to believe that, in
 “ complying with their will, they infract not
 “ duty, but maintain a right; and they can have
 “ no regard for the laws who are informed that
 “ they may create and destroy laws at pleasure,
 “ and that the living are bound by no obligation
 “ to observe the decrees of the dead.”

While you urge the multitude, however, to po-
 litical interposition, you tell us that “ to destroy
 “ the power of the magistrate is to dissolve so-
 “ ciety *.” True; the power of the magistrate,

* Mackintosh, p. 143.

therefore,

therefore, should depend on nothing like the will of the multitude. Questions which involve extensive consequences, should be discussed with wisdom, not decided by inclination. Temper and whim should have no influence in concerns which affect the well-being of states and nations: and, when we are told that the authority of the magistrate is essential to the social incorporation of man, and, consequently, to the freedom and happiness of the world; we are, likewise, told, by implication, that the extent and existence of that authority are not subjects determinable by the volition of National Assemblies, or the zeal of multitudinous debate; but by the provident sagacity, and the cautious prudence of the patriotic and the wise.

You think very differently. You think that the people, or in other words, the numeral majority of the people, which must be always constituted by the mean and the low, have a right at all times to interpose in affairs of state, and to frame a constitution for themselves; and you think also, that errors and mischiefs lurk in our government and our laws, “ sufficient to authorise such inter-
 “ position, whatever may be its effects on the wel-
 “ fare of the world. These opinions indubitably
 “ required some substantial support, though you
 “ have not thought fit to confirm them by a sin-
 “ gle argument. But, perhaps, you may be able
 “ to rest their defence on the authority of great
 “ and respectable names. Inform us, then, as to
 “ this point. What are they who have most sig-
 “ nalized themselves by detestation of our go-
 “ vernment and laws? What are they in sagaci-
 “ ty,

" ty, in judgment, in genius, and in honor? Has
 " eminent ability distinguished the character of
 " your Balls, your Iretons, your Peters, your
 " Harrisons, or your Vanes? Has the wisdom of
 " any of the host of your named or un-named co-
 " adjutors reflected lustre on your cause? Or are
 " we at once to credit the petty Cromwells of
 " your party, when they condemn without
 " proof, what they would destroy without mer-
 " cy?—No!—Your authorities are as feeble as
 " your assertions are hazardous. Whereas, how
 " many and how celebrated are they who have
 " supported and extolled the institutions you af-
 " fect to condemn. Patriots who have been pro-
 " digal of life for their country: immortal spi-
 " rits whose comprehension embraced worlds:
 " characters rich in the hoarded treasures of an-
 " cient and modern erudition: statesmen and phi-
 " losophers, before whose vision had passed the
 " various polity of nations and of ages, and whose
 " minds were but the living history of man, in all
 " the diversity of his progress from patriarchal
 " simplicity, to elegant refinement; from his first
 " coalescence in wandering tribes and pastoral
 " clans, to his final establishment in civilized so-
 " ciety—such are the persons who, after having
 " studied our Constitution, with patience, and
 " with diligence, in all the complexity of its com-
 " position, and all the diversity of its aim, have
 " bestowed on it their applause with an unsparing
 " liberality, and have prized it as the noblest and
 " most perfect monument which human virtue
 " and human reason have ever consecrated to the
 " Rights

“ Rights of Man. Hear Bracton, Coke, Little-
 “ ton, Harcourt, Mansfield, Blackstone, Montef-
 “ quieu; hear those who have climbed the steep
 “ of knowledge with the most enthusiastic perfe-
 “ verance, and surveyed, from its summit, what-
 “ ever in the moral or political world is inte-
 “ resting or instructive; and you will be inform-
 “ ed that this constitution has advocates and de-
 “ fenders whose mere opinion is sufficient to beat
 “ down the strongest of your arguments, and
 “ whose arguments, being those of wisdom and
 “ experience, are weighty as demonstration, and
 “ resistless as truth. Hear these men, we repeat
 “ it, and you will know on whom and what we
 “ depend: nor will you have much cause to be
 “ surprised that you can neither engage our gra-
 “ titude by your labours, nor our affection by
 “ your deserts.

“ You insinuate, however, that you make war
 “ only on error; and reformation is your watch-
 “ word. But we have often been too zealous to
 “ amend what was already excellent; and by la-
 “ bouring to make that perfect which was good,
 “ we may make that mischievous which we
 “ would have perfect *. Besides, reformation, if
 “ it look only to abstracted faultlessness, will and
 “ must fail of salutary effect. The institutes of
 “ nations may be practically wise, though theore-
 “ tically erroneous; and the laws from which the

* See 2. Report, Preface, for a direct instance.

“ greatest benefit is derived, are frequently those
 “ which possess only a local excellence. Thus the
 “ codes of Athens and of Sparta were the product
 “ of experience and of sagacity. But make a dif-
 “ ferent application of either ; give to Athens the
 “ code of Lycurgus, and to Sparta the code of So-
 “ lon, and you destroy the wholesomeness of both,
 “ and convert the salubrious medicine into a
 “ noxious and deadly poison. All political changes,
 “ therefore, should be made with a reference not
 “ to speculative perfection, but to time and
 “ place : not to the views of retired wisdom, but
 “ to manners, habits, connexions and modes. For
 “ this reason, we dread that wild spirit of meta-
 “ physical enterprize, which has distinguished
 “ your writings : we would proceed with rumi-
 “ nating precaution, where you would rush on
 “ with the velocity of the tempest : and we
 “ would ponder from fear, where you would sub-
 “ vert with temerity.

“ To sum up all at once. We have patiently
 “ examined your whole political creed, and can-
 “ not but regard it as the creed of projectors,
 “ visionaries, and empirics. Nor is it a mere ne-
 “ gative, we think ourselves obliged to give to
 “ your opinions. We reverence what you con-
 “ temn : and we will defend what you oppose.
 “ The constitution which you revile as a shadow ;
 “ the government which you defame as an usurp-
 “ ation ; the laws which you decry as impure
 “ and mischievous ; to these things we have
 “ been attached from our cradle, and to these
 “ things

“ things we will be attached to our grave. We
 “ see in them the seeds of public and private wel-
 “ fare. We mark them extending civil happiness
 “ to all : and, in the increasing population, and
 “ unrivalled prosperity of these islands, we re-
 “ cognize but so many arguments of their in-
 “ trinsic excellence, and so many demonstrations
 “ of their felicitous agency. Do you yet tell us,
 “ however, of the manly simplicity of the ancient
 “ republics? We reply that licentiousness and
 “ cruelty perpetually tinged the waters of Ce-
 “ phirus with Athenian blood : and that, on the
 “ shores of the Tiber, tribunitial ambition, and
 “ popular turbulence excited a thousand monu-
 “ ments of their triumphs over justice and wis-
 “ dom. Shall we compare, then, the ancient re-
 “ publics with the English government? Yes;
 “ if we may compare the regulations and conduct
 “ of democratic violence, with an administration
 “ of law, under which every man has to fear the
 “ punishment of his vices.

“ What now, upon the whole, are your senti-
 “ ments and ours?—You think that, in England,
 “ every thing is the reverse of what it appears,
 “ and what it ought to be : we, that nothing is
 “ injurious to the common freedom, and that
 “ most things are admirably calculated to promote
 “ the common good—You assert that the multi-
 “ tude are authorized whenever they please, to
 “ exert their power to the subversion of govern-
 “ ment : we, that a predominating power over the
 “ multitude is necessary to government, and ne-
 “ cessary for the support of liberty itself, by en-
 “ forcing the laws which can alone regulate and

“protect it*—You maintain that the nation is
 “furious for political regeneration: we, that it
 “would be madness to try the hazardous experi-
 “ment of a new constitution, and to reject the
 “sound doctrines of the fathers of the state, for
 “the crude whims of turbulent innovators—You
 “insist that the majority of the people may in-
 “terpose, at will, in the regulation of govern-
 “ment: we, that the danger to the common
 “rights must be great, urgent, inevitable, which
 “can authorize the slightest intervention of such
 “a majority—You argue to show that alle-
 “giance, and precedent, must and ought to yield,
 “upon all occasions, to what you term the plea-
 “sure of the nation: we, that to weaken the ties
 “of prudence and allegiance, is to foster only the
 “frenzy of innovation, which speeds to its ob-
 “ject with the rapidity of the whirlwind, and
 “ruins what it would reform—You publish, that
 “resistance to the magistrate requires no sanction
 “but the public will: we, that, after having
 “once admitted the legality of resistance on
 “extraordinary emergencies, when its vindication
 “may be found in the necessity of the case, the
 “duty of obedience cannot be enforced too often,
 “or asserted too strongly†—You urge the posi-
 “tion, that, where reform seems to be required,

* Hume, Reign of Charles I.

† It was asserted at Sacheverel's trial by a zealous Whig, that “the people were obliged by all the ties of social creatures, and of Christians, for wrath and for conscience sake, to submit to their Sovereign.” See Sir John Holland's speech.

“reform

" reform can never be too rapid and too ardent :
 " we, that of the established order of a state all
 " change should be gradual and flow; the work of
 " wisdom, patient to reflect ; of caution, fond to
 " deliberate, and of patriotism, earnest to im-
 " prove; but by no means of the numeral ma-
 " jority of the multitude, of numbers without
 " intelligence, factions without knowledge, and
 " confederations without public spirit.

" Of these very contradictory opinions the
 " public are to judge. We shall only add, that
 " while you think it meritorious to awaken the
 " enthusiasm of the multitude by perpetual con-
 " demnation of their governors and their laws ;
 " we think it much more commendable, at least
 " in times like the present, to promote modera-
 " tion, than to encourage zeal. There are in
 " these days too many speculating zealots to
 " make it necessary to inculcate the tenets of tur-
 " bulence into the common mind : and it would
 " be happy for the nation if those zealots were
 " less numerous than they are ; happier, if their in-
 " fluence and ambition were equal only to their
 " merits ; happier still, if they were not so suc-
 " cessful in concealing, under the semblance of
 " patriotism, the reality of faction ; and most
 " happy, if the good and the intelligent would
 " unite their power, and at once " frown" them
 " into contempt.

" Alien in these opinions as we may be from
 " you, for one thing we cannot but give you
 " due credit. You are consistent. Your words
 " may

“ may be sometimes contradictory, but your ob-
 “ ject is always the same. Whether you favour
 “ privilege, or condemn prerogative; whether
 “ you decry the spirit of Parliament, or the tem-
 “ per of the Crown; whether you inveigh against
 “ tests, or defame the church; whether you di-
 “ minish the authority of the legislature, or ex-
 “ aggerate that of the multitude—you only testify
 “ that you are indifferent at which end you begin
 “ the work of demolition; and that you are
 “ earnest to try which is the weakest part of the
 “ constitution, like soldiers, who, having to force
 “ their way through a stubborn rampart, make
 “ various attacks, merely to discover where a
 “ breach may be most easily effected. We would,
 “ nevertheless, urge you, in friendship, to con-
 “ temper your zeal with prudence. Many are
 “ there ready to oppose the designs of destruction,
 “ let them be formed when and by whom they
 “ may : many who are aware that the lust of do-
 “ mination oftenest dwells with those who are
 “ most vehement in their claims of liberty; many
 “ who know that the affectation of patriotism is
 “ a strong symptom of the desire of power; and
 “ that they who are most fond of making appeals
 “ to the majesty of the people, are generally the
 “ Cromwells, who are most eager to subdue
 “ and oppress them.—Such are our sentiments,
 “ and may they be useful to you! May they, by
 “ warning you to caution, secure you from shame!
 “ May they induce you to renounce hostility
 “ against the state, lest that government, which
 “ has

“ has, hitherto, been contented with counteracting
 “ your schemes, should reject lenity for justice,
 “ and give you up to the laws.”

In this manner, I think, would the modern Whigs be addressed, if addressed at all, by the temperate, the prudent, and the wise. Whether the sentiments, however, which have been here uttered, shall tend to restrain the violence of those men, I know not. Sufficient will I think it, if they have their proper influence on my countrymen; if they lead them to reject the factious theories by which they may already have been deceived; and if they promote that content and unanimity, which alone are wanting to complete the aggregate of national felicity, and to raise these nations to an higher degree of glory than was ever yet attained by the most flourishing kingdoms in the world.

For myself, my Lord, and for this letter, I would not apologize, if I did not know that, to a disposition like yours, apology, such as I have to offer, would come with no advantage. With an ardent attachment to the constitution; with loyalty to your king, and a patriotic regard to the welfare of the people; with a deep knowledge and a rational veneration of the forms and institutes of British policy; with a zeal to meliorate the general system of administration, but dread to injure it; with inclination to communicate commercial knowledge to the public, and talents to second the inclination; with a spirit which embraces, and would bless the multitude, and would, therefore, avert them from the desperate enterprizes of desperate

perate innovators—with this temper, and these virtues, you will not, I trust, want motives to pardon the intrusion of an address, which, in its aim, at least, is not reprehensible, nor in its subject unnecessary; which but seeks, under the recommendation of your name, to diffuse those political principles, on which rest no inconsiderable portion of the happiness of mankind; and which, if it should want a vindication to your Lordship and the world, will find it in the factious violence and ruinous doctrines of a bold, adventurous, and democratical party.

Nor, I persuade myself, will it be imputed to me by any candid man, that, because I would oppose all hasty innovations in the structure of government, I am, therefore, averse from all necessary reform, and all genuine Liberty. I am not. May liberty never cease to be the tutelary genius of our country! May reform, when conducted by wisdom, never meet an opponent! But, though this be my prayer, I dread the faction which would exchange freedom for licentiousness, and would rush into the temple of the constitution, with an eagerness to destroy, but an inability to improve. I know, too, that government is a machine of no simple contrivance; and that our government is peculiarly complex. For, it is the government of a rich commercial nation, the interests of which are various, multiform, and intricate. It is the government which, like the animating soul of a gigantic body, is to be the pervading and enlivening principle of a mighty empire. It is the government which is to provide

vide for the order, security, and happiness of half a world. It is the government which is to guard with caution the rights and privileges of a free people, and at the same time to restrain the licentiousness which would destroy them. It is the government which is made up of exactly-balanced and counteracting weights; of the compounded strength of people, nobles, and King; of powers so equalized, that no one can oppress the rest, and so intimately united that dissociation would be their common ruin. With an establishment of such delicacy and involution, it must be peculiarly hazardous to meddle. Injure or mutilate it in a single part, and it may operate no more. Destroy a single spring, and the pendulum, perhaps, ceases to vibrate for ever. It is not, therefore, the hasty examination of an hour which can instruct us in the diversified agency, in the co-acting and counteracting movements of a work of such vast and stupendous mechanism: it is not the rash advice of pamphlet-writing politicians, that can inform us where it is to be altered, or where improved; where its force should be increased, or its momentum diminished: and he, I think, will not exceed the truth, who shall maintain that even prudence, wisdom, and public spirit should approach it with timidity and veneration; that its seeming imperfections should be acknowledged to be real, not without much and serious investigation; and that, instead of, at all times, submitting it to the will, or to the reason of the multitude, and making it the subject of bold experiment and adventurous change; a remedy should be applied even to its

U

defects,

defects, not until consideration at once patient and profound had sanctified the attempt.

This is my opinion, and it is an opinion in the formation of which interest has had no share. I am a very sequestered man. I am neither poor nor rich enough to renounce the duty of thinking for myself. I have nothing to hope nor fear from any party; and though I had every thing to fear and hope, I would not be a partizan. What I have written, therefore, I have written with an integrity of intention, which may, in some degree, atone for deficiency of power; and, however earnest I may be to stem the tide of popular zeal, I, too, can adopt with sincerity, the aspirations of the poet:

————— O Liberty,
 Parent of happiness, celestial born!
 When the first man became a living soul,
 His sacred genius thou: be Britain's care;
 With her secure, prolong thy lov'd retreat;
 There bless mankind; while yet among her sons,
 While yet there are, to shield thine equal laws,
 Whose bosoms kindle, at the sacred names
 Of Cecil, Raleigh, Walsingham, and Drake.
 May others more delight in tuneful airs;
 In masque and dance excel; to sculptured stone
 Give, with superior skill, the living look;
 More pompous piles erect; or pencil soft,
 With warmer touch, the visionary board:
 But thou thy nobler Britons teach to rule,
 To check the ravage of tyrannic sway;
 To quell the proud; to spread the joys of peace,
 And various blessings of ingenious trade.
 Be these our arts; and ever may we guard,

Ever

Ever defend them with undaunted heart,
Inestimable good ! who giv'ft us truth,
Whose hand upleads to life ; divinest truth,
Array'd in every charm ; whose hand benign,
Teaches unwearied toil to clothe the fields,
And on his various fruits inscribes the name
Of property.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obliged,

And most obedient Servant,

JEROM ALLEY.

March 1, 1792.

F I N I S.

